Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XVIII, Issue No. 58 | WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 27, 2008 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

Govt shutdown eyed sans passed budget. **PAGE 2**

6 complain of breathing problems due to haze. **PAGE 6**

Visit us online @ www.saipantribune.com

OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Do you support the continued operation of public radio station KRNM in the CNMI?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE

Iraq Policy

John McCain said that to win the White House he must convince a war-weary country that U.S. policy in Iraq is succeeding.

NATION...Page 15

Bishops' Response

Philippine bishops held an emergency meeting to discuss their response to the crisis threatening Arroyo.

ASIA...Page 16

Oscar Belle

With Vanity Fair sitting out this year's celebrations, the belle of the Oscars parties was a piano playing Elton John.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 19

> "Many may not be aware of the severity of our situation. Now that we have this information, I hope we can use it to review how we manage our finances and make fundamental changes."
>
> **—Public Auditor Michael Sablan**

NMI scores a low 2.44 in Performeter report

Analysis shows declining status of CNMI govt

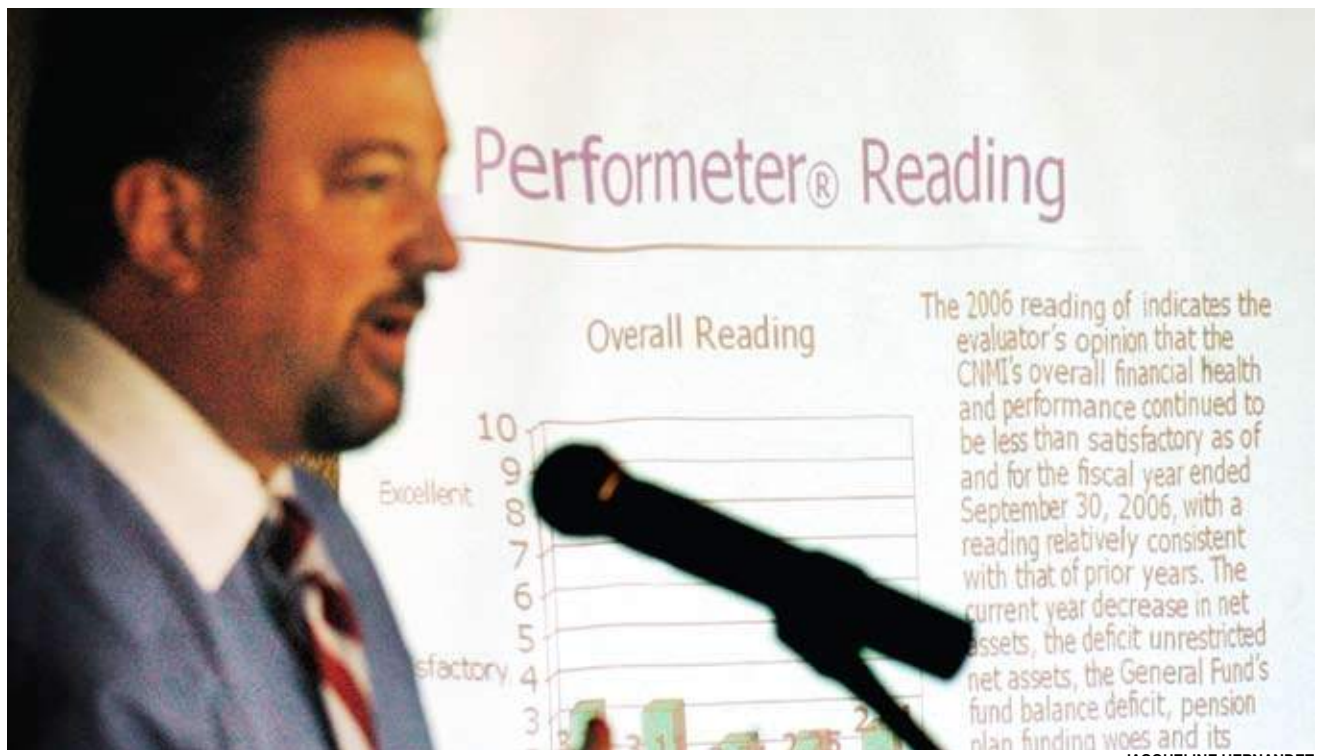
By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A study of the CNMI's financial health and performances shows the Commonwealth continues to be in trouble.

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest, the CNMI government scored 2.44 in the recently released "Performeter" analysis, which the U.S. Department of the Interior funded to gauge the fiscal performance of islands governments in 2006.

The CNMI's latest score is relatively consistent with that of prior years. The Commonwealth scored 3.18 in 2002, when the Performeter study was first conducted by Crawford & Associates CPA. The score declined to 3.11 in 2003, and further plunged to 2.24 and 2.25 in

See NMI on Page 4


Performeter® Reading
Overall Reading
The 2006 reading of indicates the evaluator's opinion that the CNMI's overall financial health and performance continued to be less than satisfactory as of and for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2006, with a reading relatively consistent with that of prior years. The current year decrease in net assets, the deficit unrestricted net assets, the General Fund's fund balance deficit, pension
Excellent
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

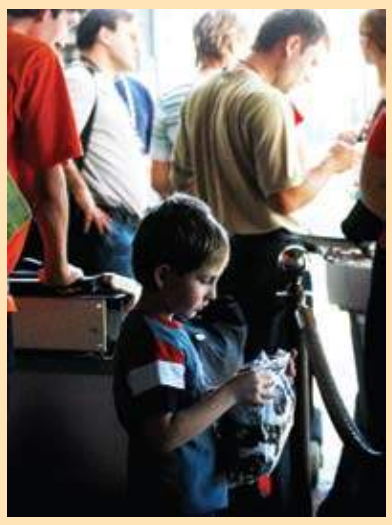
Frank Crawford of Crawford & Associates CPA presents his firm's "Performeter" report on the CNMI government's financial performance and condition during yesterday's Rotary Club of Saipan meeting at the Giovanni's Restaurant of the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Woman is stabbed in bathroom

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An ex-convict who was out on bail repeatedly stabbed and seriously injured a naked woman who was showering in the bathroom of her barracks in Afetna Sunday night, police said.

See WOMAN on Page 4



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

A Russian child checks out his Saipanda stuffed toy, which was presented to him upon arriving at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport.

Russians, they are a-coming

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

First of a two-part series

Tourist arrivals from Russia have grown by leaps and bounds the past couple years and in the current fiscal year alone, guests from the former

See RUSSIANS on Page 4

PREPAID SUPERCHARGE

Great news! All $10, $20 and $50 iConnect Prepaid cards are SUPERCHARGED to have more dollar credits!

$10 PREPAID CARD > SUPERCHARGED WITH AN ADDITIONAL 25% AIRTIME VALUE > $12.50 airtime value

$20 PREPAID CARD > SUPERCHARGED WITH AN ADDITIONAL 50% AIRTIME VALUE > $30 airtime value

$50 PREPAID CARD > SUPERCHARGED WITH AN ADDITIONAL 70% AIRTIME VALUE > $85 airtime value

Saipan - Guam Office: 888-8888
Tinian/Rota: 898-4259
www.iconnectsaipan.com
iCONNECT

Local

Govt shutdown eyed sans passed budget

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Government operations will shut down in the absence of a timely budget, if a legislative initiative becomes law.

Rep. Heinz Hofschneider, author of the proposed constitutional amendment, said the threat of a government shutdown should force the administration and the Legislature to avoid delays in passing a budget every year.

The drastic proposal comes amid the ongoing failure of the Legislature to pass a budget for fiscal year 2008, which has been running since October 2007.

Under the initiative, the administration must abide by strict budgetary deadlines: April 1 for the governor's budget submission, July 1 for a House concurrent resolution setting the spending limit, and Sept. 1 for the Legislature's passage of a budget.

If the governor fails to transmit a budget proposal by April 1, his reprogramming power will be suspended until 10 days after the budget plan is submitted.

If the Legislature fails to approve a budget by Sept. 1, all operations of the CNMI government will be suspended at the end of the fiscal year, and will resume after a budget has been adopted.

Hofschneider

Exemptions from the shutdown include the Department of Public Health, Department of Public Safety, Public School System, and the courts. They will continue to operate at appropriation levels established in the previous fiscal year until a new budget is approved.

The initiative requires approval by three-fourths of both the House of Representatives and the Senate in order to be placed on the ballot for ratification. It will be in effect once approved by majority of voters.

3rd ANNUAL MARIANAS WINDS
KITE FESTIVAL
and CULTURAL FOOD FAIR
SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 2008
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
FUN, FAMILY, and Free Admission
COME FLY YOUR KITE WITH US
KITES: Kites for Sale at reasonable prices
MAIN EVENT: KITE CONTESTS
Personalized Trophies and lots, lots of nice prizes
I. Purchased Kites
Most whimsical
Most beautiful
Largest Kite
II. Hand-Made/Personalized Kites
Most Original
Most beautiful
Smallest kite
III. Purchased or Hand-Made/ Personalized Kites
Highest Flying Kite
Longest Tail Kite
Kite-flying demonstration by 5 Korean Champion Kite Flyers
will drop presents and candies from the sky
Lots of kid activities: Arts and crafts, games, bouncy rides, etc.
AMERICAN MEMORIAL PARK
MICRO BEACH
GARAPAN
American Memorial Park
Brilliant Star School
For Registration and Contest Rules call 323-STAR or 233-1800
or download from website www.brilliantstar.org

THE SHOW MUST GO ON JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

The Senate budget hearing continues despite the unexpected power outage at the Senate chamber on Capital Hill Tuesday afternoon. The Senate Committee on Fiscal Affairs, together with different autonomous agencies, discussed the resources available to the government in fiscal year 2008.

MARIANA EXPRESS LINES PTE. LTD.

Weekly Hong Kong, Kaohsiung, Saipan, Guam, Yap, Koror, Gensan, Davao, Cebu (MXS Service)

VESSEL	VOY	HONGKONG	KAOHSHIUNG	GUAM	SAIPAN	YAP	KOROR	GENSAN	DAVAO	CEBU
SYLVETTE***	V016	2/22 FRI	2/23 SAT	2/29 FRI	3/1 SAT	SKIP	3/5 WED	3/7 FRI	3/8 SAT	3/11 TUE
ASIAN ISLAND	V005	2/29 FRI	3/1 SAT	3/7 FRI	3/8 SAT	3/11 TUE	3/12 WED	3/14 FRI	3/15 SAT	3/18 TUE
STADT HAMBURG	V013	3/7 FRI	3/8 SAT	3/14 FRI	3/15 SAT	SKIP	3/19 WED	3/21 FRI	3/22 SAT	3/25 TUE
MELL SENOKO	V017	3/14 FRI	3/15 SAT	3/21 FRI	3/22 SAT	3/25 TUE	3/26 WED	3/28 FRI	3/29 SAT	4/1 TUE
ASIAN ISLAND	V006	3/21 FRI	3/22 SAT	3/28 FRI	3/29 SAT	SKIP	4/2 WED	4/4 FRI	4/5 SAT	4/8 TUE
STADT HAMBURG	V014	3/28 FRI	3/29 SAT	4/4 FRI	4/5 SAT	4/8 TUE	4/9 WED	4/11 FRI	4/12 SAT	4/15 TUE
MELL SENOKO	V018	4/4 FRI	4/5 SAT	4/11 FRI	4/12 SAT	SKIP	4/16 WED	4/18 FRI	4/19 SAT	4/22 TUE
ASIAN ISLAND	V007	4/11 FRI	4/12 SAT	4/18 FRI	4/19 SAT	4/22 TUE	4/23 WED	4/25 FRI	4/26 SAT	4/29 TUE
STADT HAMBURG	V013	4/18 FRI	4/19 SAT	4/25 FRI	4/26 SAT	SKIP	4/30 WED	5/2 FRI	5/3 SAT	5/6 TUE

NOTE: ***SYLVETTE V16 SCHEDULED FOR DOCKING ON 23RD FEB 2008 TO 2ND/3RD MARCH (SKIP GUAM, SAIPAN AND KOROR) AND PROCEED TO GENSAN ETA 7TH MARCH 2008.

Weekly service. More frequent. More dependable.

Website: www.mariana-express.com

Exclusive General Agent of MELL

For bookings, you may call our Saipan agent:

CTSI LOGISTICS,
CTSI Building, Lower Base,
P.O. Box 501937,
Saipan MP 96950
Website: www.ctsi-logistics.com

Edgar T. Garcia
Inbound
Direct line (670) 236-2422

Jaime P. Salazar
Outbound
Direct line (670) 236-2410

Robert Reyes
Sales and Marketing
Direct line (670) 236-2403

CTSI Logistics
Moving the world

'Divert 2007 CIP project funds to NMC'

An alternative source of funding has been identified for the construction needs of the Northern Marianas College.

Rep. David M. Apatang, in a new bill, proposed that NMC's building needs be funded by federal money for capital improvement projects from 2007. He said that $1.5 million can be taken from the Puerto Rico dump project, $750,000 from the Kalabera Cave development, and $750,000 from the proposed Lake Susupe boardwalk trail.

Apatang previously introduced a bill proposing to reappropriate $3 million of 2008 CIP money for the Puerto Rico dump closure to NMC.

Under either bill, $2 million will be used for building improvements and purchase of collateral equipment at NMC. The other $1 million will go to the design of a new college campus.

The projects are seen to help NMC meet accreditation standards.

NMC is currently at risk of losing its accreditation. The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges- Western Association of Schools and Colleges recently ordered NMC to show cause why its accreditation should not be withdrawn. NMC has only a few months to comply with the order.

Part of the concerns raised by the commission is NMC's dilapidated facilities and outdated equipment.

The NMC building in Fina Sisu was constructed during the Naval Administration in 1959 and was used as a hospital. NMC moved to the building after the hospital relocated to Garapan in the early 1980s.

The NMC building was damaged during Typhoon Kim in 1986 and was partially renovated through funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

WASC has recommended, as a short-term solution to safety concerns, that the college repair its building. A long-term approach will be to build a new campus.

NMC projects that a new campus will cost $20 million to $30 million. An exact figure will not be determined until an architectural and engineering design has been completed. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***

Marianas Maid Services

Are you overwhelmed at work?
Has taking care of your kids and the housework become a burden?

LET US MAKE YOUR HOME OR OFFICE

*****SPARKLE*****

Cleaning services starting as low as $30 per cleaning.
All equipment and cleaning supplies provided.

All our staff has been hand picked and are reliable.

Ironing, Laundry, Window washing and many other services available upon request.

Contact Julie at 287-6542 to schedule an appointment.

Torres assails gasoline prices hikes

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Stanley T. Torres lambasted Shell Marianas Inc. and Mobil Oil Marianas yesterday for raising their gas prices on Saipan again when, according to him, the two oil companies are still selling the old supply.

"They still have gasoline in their supply, but they are already raising their prices!" Torres told *Saipan Tribune*.

The lawmaker explained that, based on his information, the next arrival of the tanker for Shell is March 4 or 5, while that of Mobil is March 5.

"How come they are so greedy? We're paying for the old supplies here while waiting for the new one. What kind of business are they doing here?" Torres asked.

He said these giant companies should stop this practice.

Effective Monday night, Shell increased its gas prices on the island by 10 cents a gallon. This was its second increase of the year but the fifth in the last three months.

Shell Marianas president Eloy Lizama had explained that the cost of finished products in Singapore, where Shell gets its supply, has again set new historical marks.

"The continuing increase in Shell's finished product cost forces us to move our prices," he said.

Saipan Tribune learned that Mobil Oil Marianas actually was the first one to increase its gas prices by 10 cents a gallon effective Sunday night. Mobil doesn't announce and explain to the media when it hikes its prices.

Shell and Mobil now have the same prices.

Lifoifoi named anew to CPA board

Businessman Jose Lifoifoi has been appointed back to the board of directors of the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Acting Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez on Monday named Lifoifoi to serve as a representative of Saipan to the CPA board.

The nomination requires Senate approval. If his appointment is confirmed, Lifoifoi will serve at CPA until Jan. 16, 2011. That is four years from the date of his initial reappointment, which he had declined because he wanted to focus on his work with the United Micronesia Development Association Inc.

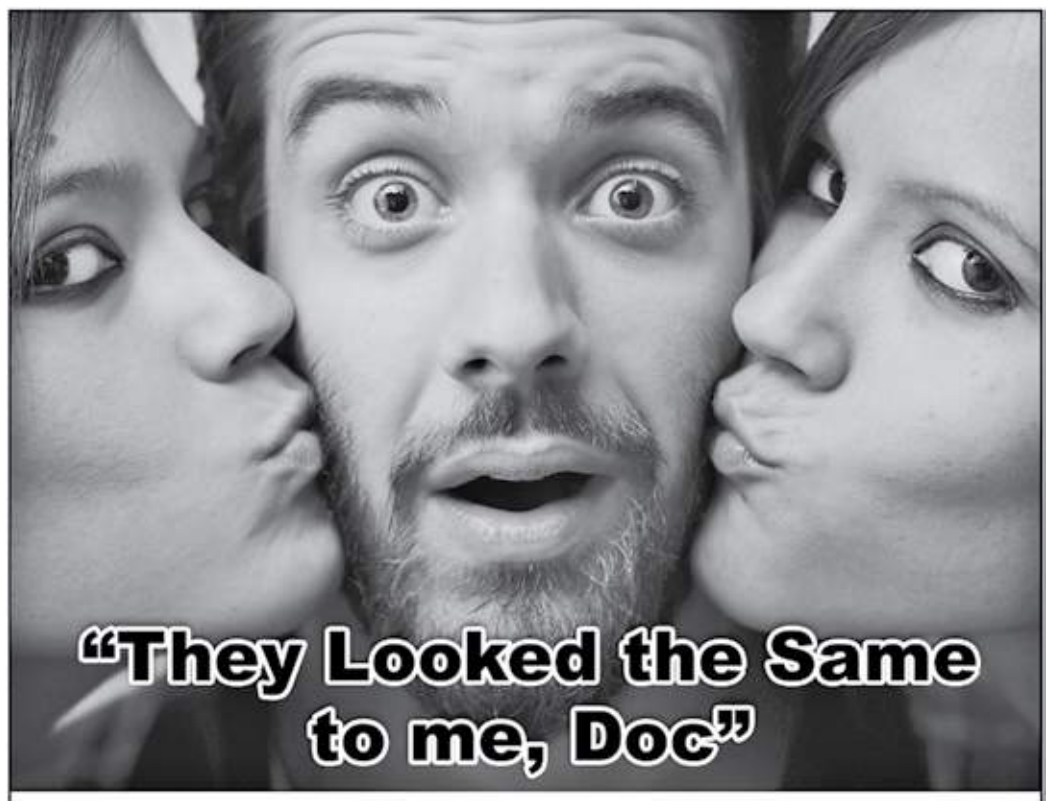
Lifoifoi was elected chairman of the UMDA board of directors on March 8, 2007. He has been a board member of the investment group since 1991.

Lifoifoi was chairman of the CPA board for four years until he quit last year. He was the House speaker of the 5th CNMI Legislature. He had been elected to the House of Representatives three consecutive times before his speakership.

He also serves as the Republic of Palau's honorary consul general to the Commonwealth.

Last week, the Senate confirmed another appointee to the CPA board. The senators voted unanimously to confirm the nomination of Alejo Mendiola Jr., a former vice speaker of the House of Representatives.

Mendiola will serve out what is left of the term of Melchor A. Mendiola, who resigned from the board recently. Melchor Mendiola's term would have expired on May 14, 2010. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***



Norman picked up the small tube of eye medicine, leaned back, and placed the ointment into his eye. Only one problem: it wasn't eye ointment. Norman had accidentally picked up the tube of super-glue. In an instant his left eye was sealed shut. For five days. Using a gentle touch and the newest medicines, Marianas Eye Institute's Dr. Mark Robertson ensured that Norman avoided permanent damage and fully regained his vision.

If we can help Norman with his embarrassing super-glued lids, then surely we can help you when your eyes feel a little sticky or irritated. From basic to advanced, we're your place for world-class eye care.

Dr. David Khorram, MD
America's Top Ophthalmologists

Dr. Mark Robertson, OD
Magna Cum Laude

Marianas Eye Institute
"Where Technology Meets Talent"
235-9090
Beach Road, Garapan
www.MarianasEye.com

One-Hour Glasses • Contacts • Medical Eye Care
Advance Surgery & Laser • Botox

We accept: Aetna, Staywell, Moylan's, TakeCare, Medicaid, Calvos', Medicare, TriCare and more.

65 DES students learn water safety

The Dandan Elementary School is working closely with the DPS Boating Safety Section to teach its students about 10 "Aqua Smart" lessons for water and boating safety.

On Feb. 19-22, 2008, 65 DES students were taught skills about boating safety and how to be safe while they are in the water swimming.

At the end of the program, certificates were handed out to the students for completing the workshop. The officers were also given a certificate of appreciation by school principal Jonas Barcinas for their outstanding community service to the DES students.

The instructors that presented the five-day lessons were officers David Rabauliman and Roy Kaipat.

The focus and purpose of this four-day lesson presentation was to educate students in grades 5th as it is the grade highly recommended by the Department of Public Safety, in collaboration with the Public School System.

Most of the lessons were taught in the morning at 9:45am to 10:45am. Students watched videos of lessons and then they engaged in a class discussions and sharing of past knowledge or experiences. It was an interactive learning.

"The instructors were very knowledgeable about the topics and also very effective in delivering questions and answers. The students really enjoyed the lessons," said Barcinas.

A workbook was given to all the students as part of the discussion. At the end of the five-day class, an assessment was given to see how much they've learned.

"The skills taught gave the students some awareness and better understanding on how to be more cautious and mindful about avoiding danger while in the water. It also taught them how to be of help to others in the event that someone is experiencing some problem in the water," said Barcinas.

"As the principal, I always believe in partnership with any of the community helpers whether it is government agencies or private sectors. I want to provide our students an array of learning aside from the many things that they are already learning in the classrooms. I want them to be exposed to the real world so they can be wealthy in the skills of survival. In the classroom, students learn similar concepts aligned with our standards and benchmarks. As always, we want our students to be well rounded in all areas so they too can be good and effective contributing citizens of the community," he added.

Some of the lessons that learned during the five-day period were:

LESSON 1 : Learn to Swim
LESSON 2: Wear a Life Jacket
LESSON 3: Learn to Float
LESSON 4: Reach, Throw, or Row
LESSON 5: Look Before You Leap
LESSON 6 : Don't Overload Your Boat
LESSON 7: Stay With Your Boat
LESSON 8: Learn Boating Rules of the Road
LESSON 9: Alcohol, Drugs, and Boating Don't Mix
LESSON 10: Be Polite, Don't Pollute

NMI

From Page 1

2004 and 2005.

Frank Crawford, who developed the Performeter methodology, attributed the current low score to decrease in net assets, the deficit in unrestricted net assets, the central government's fund balance deficit, pension plan funding woes, and cash flow problems.

Compared with other U.S. insular areas, the Northern Marianas is in the lower tier with Guam, which Crawford said scored 1.32. The State of Yap scored the highest at nearly 9, and American Samoa scored around 6.

For fiscal year 2006, the unreserved fund balance deficit of the General Fund was $163.6 million. This deficit, if paid that year, would have eaten up 84.9 percent of the government's total revenue. A huge bulk of the deficit ($136.4 million) is related to pension and other employee benefit plan liabilities.

The Performeter indicated that the CNMI had been relying more and more heavily on revenue it does not control, such as federal grants. In FY2006, the CNMI had direct control over 68.4 percent of its revenues, down from 77.5 percent and 76.7 in 2004 and 2005.

For FY2006, local taxpayers, including foreign workers, paid $153.6 million or $2,219 per capita. Crawford said this indicates a relatively moderate tax burden, compared with other U.S. insular areas. The financial ratio of taxes per capita is about $7,500 in the U.S. Virgin Islands and about $300 in the Marshall Islands.

As of FY2006, the CNMI had $257.1 million in long-term debt. Using the population reported in the 2000 census, every person in the Commonwealth, including foreign nationals, owes a long-term debt of $3,714. Crawford said this is "pretty high," and continues a trend of increases from prior years.

The pension plan funding is one of the areas where the CNMI is in serious trouble. As of Sept. 30, 2006, the CNMI's pension plan assets were 46 percent of what the NMI Retirement Fund needs to pay retirees. Although the ratio is a slight improvement from the three preceding years, it is expected to decline in 2007 due to the suspension of government contributions to the pension program.

Crawford reported that the CNMI's debt-to-assets ratio is another unsatisfactory financial indicator and shows the continued decline of assets that remain debt-free. For every $1 of assets the CNMI owns, the Commonwealth owes $1.17 to creditors.

The CNMI faces a major cash flow problem, according to the Performeter analysis. As of Sept. 30, 2006, the CNMI had a government-wide ratio of current assets to current liabilities of 0.82 to 1. This indicates that the CNMI has 82 cents of current assets to fund each dollar of current liabilities. This is a slight decline from 1.07 in 2004 and 0.83 in 2003.

Public Auditor Michael S. Sablan expressed hope that the local government would use the data constructively, instead of engaging in a blame game.

"Many may not be aware of the severity of our situation. Now that we have this information, I hope we can use it to review how we manage our finances and make fundamental changes," Sablan said.

The budget, he said, is one of the major areas that the CNMI government can improve on. The government averages one budget every four years—typically, in the first year of every new administration. "That is the best recipe for financial disaster," said Sablan.

He urged policymakers to consider adopting Hawaii's policy, where the governor's budget automatically becomes law if the Legislature fails to pass a budget by May 31. Another option is a multi-year budget which Sablan said would compel policymakers to think in the longer term.

WOMAN

From Page 1

When police officers arrived at the scene, they found the victim Yahui Tian with a knife still lodged in her nape. Doctors removed the knife in an operation at the Commonwealth Health Center.

Tian, 30, a Chinese, is now paralyzed on the left side of her body and legs. She sustained three stab wounds—one on the left collar, another on the right side of the neck, and one on the spinal cord.

The suspect, John Vincent M. Namauleg, 36, was arrested Monday night in San Antonio. He was detained for attempted murder, aggravated assault and battery, assault with a dangerous weapon, assault and battery, disturbing the peace, and contempt of court.

At yesterday's bail hearing, Superior Court associate judge David A. Wiseman set no bail for Namauleg's temporary liberty.

Detective Juan M. Santos stated in his report that the stabbing happened inside the bathroom of the Uno Moda Garment's employees' barracks.

Investigation showed that Tian had just arrived from church and was about to take a shower.

Tian's roommate and a friend were talking inside one of the rooms in the barracks when they heard screaming and shouting.

When they checked outside, they saw through the bathroom's open door a man sitting on Tian, who was lying naked on the floor. The man, later identified as Namauleg, had no shirt and was wearing dark short pants.

The witnesses then shouted for help, prompting Namauleg to run and climb the stairs to the rooftop of Siloam Market.

Another witness heard the commotion and saw the defendant about to jump from a building.

At 9:39pm, police officers responded to the scene after receiving a call about the incident.

When the officers arrived, they saw several Chinese individuals carrying the victim on a plywood. The officers saw one man supporting the victim's neck because of a knife that was lodged on the back of her neck. Medics responded and brought the victim to CHC.

Last Feb. 9, police arrested Namauleg after investigation showed that he was allegedly responsible for forging and cashing checks that had been stolen from defunct garment manufacturer Neo Fashion Inc.

The defendant was released on bail only last Thursday.

Namauleg pleaded guilty to theft and forgery in March 2006. His probation ended on Jan. 30, 2008.

RUSSIANS

From Page 1

Soviet republic have seen an 87-percent spike.

According to figures from the Marianas Visitors Authority, the market has grown from 964 tourists in the October-January in Fiscal Year 2006 to a robust 1,806 in the same four-month period in FY 2007.

The increase in tourists coming from Russia was buoyed by charter flights from Vladivostok Air and DalAvia Airlines at the end of the year as well as the continuous influx of Russians aboard Asiana Airlines via Seoul.

While the Russian market still lags behind the CNMI's main tourist markets of Japan, Korea, and China, the government and business sectors are encouraged by its recent growth.

"The governor joins the CNMI tourism industry in welcoming Russian tourists. Gov. Fitial would like to see even more Russian tourists visit the Commonwealth. He is very pleased with the growth of the Russian tourist market and completely supports further growth," said Charles P. Reyes, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's press secretary.

The importance of the Russian market has also not been lost on the local hotel industry; majority of the hotels on island have already hired Russian-speaking staff to accommodate them, according to Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands chair Lynn A. Knight.

"The hotels are really thrilled to have Russian tourists. Eight of the resorts now have Russian-speaking staff to cater to this market. They tend to like the suite rooms and patronize all of the resort facilities. They also do a lot of optional tours and enjoy shopping and fine dining. They come with their families and have a wonderful time in the tropical Saipan environment," she said.

Roman Gregoriev, Vladivostok Air senior manager for administration and operations (Japan and USA), agreed with Knight's observation and added that Russian tourists have come to like Saipan because it is a safe place to spend their vacation.

"We were very happy to have charters to Saipan. Everything was perfect; we felt great support from all concerned authorities and especially from handling company, POI Aviation," he said. "All Russians say that Saipan is very safe, people are very friendly, hotels and local infrastructure are really good, and shopping is not bad. Some tourists say that Saipan [is] little bit more expensive then other places—Thailand, for example."

MVA Russia marketing staff Leng Bai attributed the increase in Russian tourists through efforts by the CNMI tourism body, especially its Russia Ad Hoc Committee.

"It's through the effort of the Russia Ad Hoc Committee of MVA and our presence in Russia last year for the Tourism Travel Fair. It was also through the FAM tours that chartered the flights, hosted by MVA and Russia Ahoy members," he said.

Russia Ad Hoc chair Tatiana Babauta, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's Russian sales manager, welcomed the increase in tourists from her homeland, emphasizing the fact that the market brings in precious tourist dollars since, on average, Russian guests stay 12 days in the CNMI, making them a viable market to pursue and grow.

She echoed what Knight and Gregoriev already stated that Russians love coming to Saipan because of the tropical climate and relative safety. She, however, added that her countrymen also seem to appreciate the honesty of people on the island.

Babauta said aside from the garden variety tourist jaunts—Banzai Cliff, Last Command Post, Suicide Cliff, Bird Island Lookout, Managaha Island, and the likes—shopping has also become one of the favorite pastimes of Russians who come to Saipan.

She said that one wealthy Russian tourist from their hotel spent about $25,000 in luxury items at DFS Galleria last month. This is on top of reports that another tourist from Pacific Islands Club also plunked down another $25,000 at the high-end Garapan store.

DFS Galleria sales and marketing manager Nikki Kim would neither confirm nor deny the spending spree of the two Russian tourists, but admitted that the market is a great addition to the islands.

He said Russian tourists splurge on such luxury items like signature bags, watches, and jewelry as DFS Galleria.

Aside from their reputation as being big spenders, the Russian market is also known for coming back to destinations they love multiple times.

Marianas Resort and Spa Russian market supervisor Elena Deets said, "We already know that they like the warm weather, nature, beaches, adventure, and shopping, but it's also worth noting that many of them are in their second and third trips here already."

Hyatt Regency Saipan's marketing and sales director Ken Kaku agreed that while the tropical climate is the No. 1 reason Russians flee Father Winter and come to Saipan, she added they would not be coming to the CNMI at all if the service is not that good.

"No doubt the climate is No. 1—the sun, the beautiful ocean, white sandy beaches—but quality is key. They do not like poor service, low quality of facilities, meals, and others, she said.

Kaku also said that while Russian tourists, especially families, prefer water park concepts like Pacific Islands Club's and Saipan World Resort's, the high-end family market still prefer the ocean on Saipan to swimming pools.

The ease of traveling to Saipan, a U.S. territory, is also one of the reasons why more and more Russians are choosing the CNMI as opposed to Thailand, the Philippines, and other tropical destinations.

"They like what other people like about our islands... great weather, nice beaches, marine sports, and relaxation. The ease of travel to the CNMI is also a huge plus. Obtaining a VEP is quite easy as opposed to a U.S. visa for Guam and the states," said PIC Saipan Russian market manager Elly Stoilova.

To be continued.

LAPD detectives: Miura hatched plot to kill wife

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Japanese businessman Kazuyoshi Miura is escorted by Corrections officers as he exits the courtroom of the CNMI Superior Court in Susupe Monday afternoon.

Two Los Angeles Police Department detectives provided details of how Japanese businessman Kazuyoshi Miura allegedly hatched the plot to kill his wife in 1981 in LA in order to collect on life insurance policies.

LAPD detectives Frank Garcia and Jimmy Sakoda discussed how Miura asked two persons to carry out separate hammer and gun attacks on his wife in their complaint to support the arrest warrant issued by the Municipal Court of Los Angeles Judicial District on May 5, 1988.

The documents were among the papers filed by the Attorney Generals' Office Monday in the case against Miura.

Garcia and Sakoda stated in the report that on July 14, 1981, Miura met with Michiko Yazawa and they discussed various methods of killing Miura's wife, Kazumi, to collect on insurance proceeds.

On July 27, 1981, Miura allegedly gave money to Yazawa for travel expenses from Tokyo, Japan to LA.

The detectives said that on Aug. 5, 1981, the defendant bought overseas travel insurance on Kazumi's life for 75 million yen.

Seven days later, Yazawa traveled from Tokyo to LA and checked in at the New Otani Hotel.

Miura and his wife Kazumi also checked in at the same hotel that same day.

On Aug. 13, 1981, allegedly upon Miura's instruction, Yazawa entered Kazumi's room and hit her on the head with a metal hammer-like object. Kazumi survived the attack.

The detectives said that on Nov. 16, 1981, the defendant again purchased overseas travel insurance on Kazumi's life for 75 million yen.

On Nov. 17, 1981, Miura and Kazumi flew from Tokyo to LA where they checked into the City Center Motel at 1135 West Seventh Street.

The following day, Miura allegedly drove Kazumi to the 200 block of North Fremonth Street in LA and gave a hand signal to an unknown person to shoot Kazumi in the head. The unknown person shot Kazumi with a .22 caliber firearms.

The detectives said that on March 11, 1982, Miura collected insurance proceeds of 30,020,437 yen from Dai-Ichi Life Insurance Co. On March 24, 1982, the defendant collected insurance proceeds of 50,030,004 yen from Chiyoda Life Insurance Co. On July 9, 1982, the detectives said, the defendant also collected insurance proceeds of 81,996,514 yen from A.I.U. Insurance Co.

Miura reportedly collected a total of about $1.4 million (€940,000) at today's exchange rate on all these life insurance policies.

Local authorities, in coordination with LAPD, arrested the 60-year-old Miura at the Saipan international airport Friday afternoon as he was about to depart for Narita.

During Monday's hearing, Superior Court associate judge David Wiseman set no bail for Miura's temporary liberty.

The prosecution said Miura and his current wife arrived on Saipan as tourists a few days before being arrested.

Miura had already been convicted in Japan in 1994 of the murder of his wife, Kazumi. The verdict, however, was overturned by Japan's high courts 10 years ago.

CDA board to decide on non-compliant status of call center

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Development Authority board of directors has yet to make a decision whether to revoke or suspend the qualifying certificate for We Manage Calls since it broke one of the terms of its application.

According to economic development analyst Carline B. Sablan, We Manage Calls was issued a QC in 2006 and had up to February 2008 to establish its call center operations that it had proposed to do in its application.

"However, they are right now in non-compliance [status] because obviously they have not pushed through with what they had proposed," said Sablan.

She added that the board is now in a position to decide what to do with We Manage Calls' QC application, given that it is now non-compliant.

"Is the board going to make a recommendation to the governor to revoke or suspend their QC application? It's really up to the board to decide," said Sablan.

Although We Manage Calls Inc. had failed to establish operations, they are still given a chance to extend their deadline.

"However, the company has not come in to this day to make such request. So we're not sure at this point if they've opted to abandon this project or hold it off until what will happen with regards to the federalization of immigration," said Sablan.

Sablan explained that Erick Van Der Maas and his Los Angeles-based business partner, Hans Smith, had shared concerns about the federalization of immigration.

"They are non-U.S. citizens. So they, themselves, don't know what status they will have once immigration is federalized," said Sablan. Both Van Der Maas and Smith are Dutch nationals.

Sablan said that the We Manage Calls, Inc has not relayed its strategy but that they have pretty much indicated that the project is not feasible given the CNMI's economic circumstances.

USSP Club
Starts: 7pm-12am
BYOC Wednesday
8-Ball Tourney
On Stage
Rock Islanders Band
Pool Entry: $5.00, Double Elimination
Come on in and do your aerobic early.
byoc-bring your own chow/chasers

HARDT EYE CLINIC

Experience our personal touch to Eye Care
DAVID HARDT, O.D. | DON HARDT, O.D.
SERVICES OFFERED:
• New patients welcome • Thorough examinations for eye disease
• Treatment for infections and injuries • Glaucoma treatment • Diabetic eye care
• Infant/children eye exams • We love kids
• Staff aare fluent in Chamorro, Carolinian, Japanese, Tagalog and Chinese.
We are open for your convenience 6 days a week.
Monday to Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm except Wednesdays from 10:00am to 7:00pm and Saturdays from 9:00am to 1:00pm.
We accept most insurance plans including Aetna, Medicaid, Medicare, Staywell, Calvo's, Netcare, Takecare. Tricare Overseas, and Blue Cross (Federal Govt. employees)
We accept most credit cards including Visa, MasterCard and American Express
Please call us now at 235-2030
We are located at beach road next to Megabyte.

FIESTA Resort & SPA SAIPAN
A TanHoldings Company
Chill Out Wednesday at Chambre Lounge with ZYNERGY
No Cover Charge
Live Music Starts at 9:00pm
Live the Fiesta Way!
Brought to you by: CLUB X, Miller Lite, SAIPANCELL COMMUNICATIONS, Stress Free
Tel.: 234-6412 to 6414 or 234-7171 www.fiestasaipan.com

Commonwealth I Sankattan Siha Na Islas Mariana
Ofisinan I Gubietno
Dipåttamenton I Tano' Pupbliku

NOTISIAN PRINIPONEN ATKILON TÅNO' PUBLIKU

Segun i Lai Publiku 15-2, I Dipåttamenton Tano' Publiku man-nånå'i' notisia pot i intension para ma'atkilan tano' publiku giya Saipan, Commonwealth Sankatan siha na Islas Marianas. Maseha håye na petsona interesao, siña muna halom opinion, infotmasion, yan kinentra pot i mapropone na atkilon tano publiku. I mapropopone i sigiente siha.

i. Para uma`atkila tano' publiku madeskribe kumo i numiron propiadåt 003 A 11, konsisiste kuårentai-nuebe mit kuåttro sientos sinkuentai-nuebe metro (49,459) square meters, 003 A 20, ha konsisiste kuårentai-nuebe mit, kinientos tres (49,503) square meters, 003 A 19, ha konsisiste dies mit(10,000) square meters, mas o` menos ni gaige giya Marpi, Saipan. Kopian i lugåt i sitiu gaige gi Depåttamenton Tano' Publiku ni libre hao umina.

ii. I para u inatkila este na tano i Win DnC. Co., LTD, un koporasion gi CNMI. I kuetpon direktot siha i sigente: Youngjai Kim, Kwon Hee Lee, yan si Kwi Dong Woo.

I presidente yan treserun i koporasion si Youngjai Kim. I segundo presidente si Kwon Hee Lee; sekritåria si Kwi Dong Woo.

iii. Si Señor Youngjai Kim (Presidente yan Treseru), Kwon Hee Lee (segundon i Presidente) yan si Kwi Dong Woo (Sekritårio), munigosiu i kontratan atkilon.

iv. I para u inatkila i lugåt debi de u usa solamente para u håtsa ya u establesi un hotel yan ottro siha fasilidåt.

I mapropone na tiempon kontråtan atkilon para bente-siñko åños (25 yrs.), yan appottunidat ma-ekstiende para talo kinse åños (15 yrs.).

I mapropone na åpas atkilon gi sakkan durånten i tiempo sigun i mapega na presiu segun i balin i lugåt.

v. I kabåles na kopian i mapropone na kontråtan atkilon siña un chule gi ofisinan I Dipåttamenton Tano' Publiku, ni gaige gi mina dos na bibienda gi Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, giya Saipan, mina dos bibienda gi Bank of Saipan Commercial Building giya Luta, fine'nina na bibienda gi Kings Commercial Building giya Tinian.

vi. Taya otro propositu guaha pot kontråtan atkilon tano publiko ni tineteka iya Marpi, Saipan.

vii. I Sekretarion Dipåttamenton Tano' Publiku siempre hu aksepta tinige' opinion, mensåhen kinentra yan testimonio osino otro siha na propositu ginen i man-interesao na petsona åntes de Matsu 6, 2008 gi Ofisinan Dipåttamenton Tano' Publiku siha ni gaige giya Saipan, Tinian yan Luta.

ARONGORONG REEL POMWOL AKKILONUL FALÚWEER TOULAP

Sángi Tálil 106 (b) mellól Alléghúl Toulap ye 15-2, Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap ekke atotoowow ammataf igha ebwe akkilaaló eghús falúw mellól Seipél, Commonwealth Téél Falúwasch Marianas. Schóókka eyoor máfiyeer rebwe isisilong ischil mángámangiir, aweewe, aingiingil reel pomwol akkilonul ammwelil falúweer toulap. Me bwal Alléghúl Toulap ye 15-2, e ayoora, lamal aweewe kka rebwe mweiti ngali milikka ebwe akkatééló.

i. Pomwol akkilonul falúweer toulap ekke bwáári Lot No. 003 A 11, eyoor faigh me tiwow sangaras fabwughuw limeigh me tiwow llapal (49,459 square meters), elap me ngáre eghús, Lot No. 003 A 20, faigh me tiwoow sangaras, lima bwughuw elluw (49,503) sq. meters llapal, elap me ngare eghuus, me Lot No. 003 A 19,, seigh sangaras (10,000) sq. meters, llapal, elap me eghus, elo Máschepi, Seipél. Tilighial bwuley yeel nge eyoor llól Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap (Public Lands) ngare óubwe ghuley fischiy.

ii. Schéschéél schóól akkilon nge Win DnC Co., LTD., corporation. Schóól Assamwoolul mwiisch (board of directors) mellol corporation nge Youngjai Kim, Kwon Hee Lee me Kwidong Woo.

Samwoolul (President me Treasurer) corporation nge Youngjai Kim. Vice President nge Kwon Hee Lee. Sekkretório nge Kwidong Woo.

iii. Schóól aweweel akkilon nge Youngjai Kim (Samwoolul me Treasurer), Kwon Hee Lee (Vice President) me Kwidong Woo (Sekkretório) corporation yeel.

iv. Schóól akkilon ebwe yááyá bwuley ngali schagh akkayul hotel me akkaw iimw kka a fillong.

Tool aighúghúl pomwol akkilon ebwe ruweigh me limwoow ráágh (25 years), emmwel rebwe sóbweey ngáli bwal seigh me limwoow ráágh (15 years).

Pomwol akkilon ebwe mwir sángi llapal méél falúw (value of the property).

v. Emmwel óubwe bwughil tilighial akkilon mellól bwulasiyool ammwelil falúweer toulap, elo aruwowal pwó(2nd floor) me Joeten Dandan Commercial Building llól Dandan, Seipél; aruwowal pwó (2nd floor) mellól Bank of Saipan Commercial Buiding, Luuta; me ngáre mmwal pwó (1st floor) mellól Kings Commercial Building, Tchúlúyól.

vi. Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap nge esáál bweibwogh mwo akkááw pomwol akkilon yeel me Máschepi, Seipél.

vii. Samwoolul Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap ebwe bwughil aweewe kkaal, aingiingil, mereer amweyút aramas mmwal schagh Ghúúw(Móózo) 6, 2007 mellól Depattamentool Bwulasiyool Ammwelil Falúweer Toulap iye elo Seipél, Luuta me Tchúlúyól..

NOTICE OF PROPOSED LEASE OF PUBLIC LAND

In accordance with Section 106 (b) of Public Law 15-2, the Department of Public Lands hereby gives notice of its intent to lease certain public lands in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Any interested parties of the general public may submit comments, data, views, or arguments of alternative proposals for the lease of the public land. As further provided by Public Law 15-2, the following pertinent information is required to be published.

i. The proposed lease of public land is described as Lot No. 003 A 11, containing an area of approximately 49,459 square meters, more or less, Lot No. 003 A 20, containing an area of approximately 49,503 square meters, more or less, and Lot No. 003 A 19, containing an area of approximately 10,000 square meters, situated in Marpi, Saipan. A copy of the location of the parcel is available at the Department of Public Lands for inspection.

ii. The prospective lessee is Win DnC Co., LTD., a CNMI corporation. The board of directors of the corporation are Youngjai Kim, Kwon Hee Lee, and Kwidong Woo.

The president and treasurer of the corporation is Youngjai Kim. The vice president is Kwon Hee Lee. The secretary is Kwidong Woo.

iii. The proposed lease was negotiated by Mr. Youngjai Kim, Mr. Kwon Hee Lee, and Mr. Kwidong Woo, president/treasurer, vice president, and secretary, respectively, of the corporation.

iv. The lessee shall use the premises solely for the purpose of constructing and developing a hotel and related facilities.

The term of the proposed lease agreement is 25 years, with an option to extend the lease for an additional 15 years.

The proposed annual rental during the term is based on a percentage of the appraised fair market value of the property.

v. A copy of the proposed lease agreement may be obtained at the office of the Department of Public Lands, located on the 2nd floor of the Joeten Dandan Commercial Building in Dandan, Saipan; the 2nd floor of the Bank of Saipan Commercial Building, Rota; or the 1st floor of the Kings Commercial Building, Tinian.

vi. The Department of Public Lands has received no alternative proposals to lease the subject public land in Lower Base, Saipan.

vii. The Secretary of the Department of Public Lands shall accept written comments, views, arguments or alternative proposals from interested parties on or before March 6, 2008 at the Department of Public Lands offices located in Saipan, Rota or Tinian.

6 complain of breathing difficulties due to haze

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

At least six people have complained of respiratory problems that may have been caused by the volcanic haze drifting from the active Anatahan volcano.

According to Commonwealth Health Center's director of medical affairs Dr. Edward Cornett, "we have seen approximately six patients with respiratory complaints over the past 48 hours. These complaints may well very have been incited by the volcanic ash."

The volcanic haze that has blanketed the CNMI on many occasions has caused breathing problems among residents such as coughing and shortness of breath.

People with asthma or chronic obstructive lung disease are often most vulnerable to suffering the effects of the volcanic haze.

Although it has not claimed any lives, it poses a serious health threat to children with asthma and other individuals with respiratory problems.

Cornett said standard of care treatments was carried out in the emergency department and all were discharged after meeting discharge requirements.

"The approach to respiratory patients essentially includes bronchodilators, or puffer therapy, and in most cases corticosteroid therapy to ease the inflammation caused by the irritant. Only in rare instances is antibiotic therapy utilized. X-rays are not needed in the majority of these patients," Cornett said.

He added that patients can do more for themselves to prevent the worsening of asthma or COPD by limiting activity and staying indoors during volcanic activity.

"In all cases, should difficulty of breathing worsen or chest pain or fever begin they should seek care or call 911 for transfer to the emergency department," Cornett said.

BUDGET HEARING Sen. Maria Frica T. Pangelinan, chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Fiscal Affairs, and Sen. Paul A. Manglona, a member of the committee, listen during Tuesday afternoon's Senate budget hearing at the Senate chamber on Capital Hill.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

PDN report: NMI doing more than Guam for persons with disabilities

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI has helped its people with disabilities land jobs more than its neighboring island of Guam, according to a *Pacific Daily News* report, citing statistics compiled by the U.S. Department of Education.

The PDN report quotes the U.S. DOE as saying that people with disabilities in the CNMI are more likely to find work and at a much higher pay than those in Guam.

Of the two federally funded programs, the CNMI's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation under Office of the Governor has been able to provide better operations and services to its clients with disabilities despite having a smaller office staff and a smaller budget to work with, PDN said.

The CNMI office has an office staff of 12 employees while Guam has an office staff of 17. The CNMI office has only three counselors who are responsible for 50 clients each.

According to Margarita Olopai-Taitano, director of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, the CNMI office used to have four counselors, "but with the current workload, we only need three."

She added that, "We in the CNMI try to do our best with the federally funded resources given in making a difference in the lives of people with disabilities, especially those who have the desire to work or be self-sufficient."

The PDN report said that the CNMI office has been able to find jobs for 33 of its clients at a $1.02 million budget for Fiscal year 2006. On the other hand, Guam used up $2.05 million budget to find jobs for only 14 of its clients.

It was also reported that the CNMI clients also received a much higher wage, on average, than Guam's clients: $10.28 per hour, versus $8.05 an hour.

On a cost-per-client basis, the CNMI office spent about $31,172 in federal funding during Fiscal Year 2006 for each successful job placement. Guam's office, PDN said, spent about $146,714 per successful job placement.

According to the article, "that was worse than the year before, when the Guam office spent an average of $95,762 per client to find jobs for 18 people."

In addition to the CNMI office's doing more for less, it takes the CNMI just one year to find jobs for its clients in Fiscal Year 2006 beginning from the time they applied for services, as opposed to Guam's three-year wait.

However, according to the U.S. DOE's statistics, the Guam office received 137 applications for service during Fiscal 2006, which was more than the CNMI's office at 126 applications.

With that, the CNMI managed to close 43 of its active cases that year, with 33 of its clients landing jobs after receiving government services. The Guam office closed only 29 cases, with 14 of those clients landing jobs.

Although latest statistics are not yet available through the U.S. DOE, the Guam office had reported to 22 of its clients who found work at Fiscal 2007.

Olopai-Taitao said the vocational rehabilitation programs are federally funded services that should be maximized.

"So, as professionals who are hired to deliver services to persons with disabilities, we must assertively work the extra miles for our precious persons with disabilities," Olopai-Taitano said.

She added that the challenges that people with disabilities experience everyday are tough. "But their lives can get easier when we become their assertive advocates in eradicating barriers in our environments at all levels, starting from our minds, hearts and out to all our public and private communities."

The office cited the Office of the Governor for "strongly supporting the needs of the program."

Pete A. pushes US military's use of Tinian

Washington Representative Pete A. Tenorio has been advocating for the increased military use of land on Tinian by the U.S. military in recent discussions with Adm. Michael G. Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Tenorio

Mullen has acknowledged the prolonged frustrations experienced by the people of the CNMI over the unmet expectations regarding the use of Tinian by the military as originally intended by the Covenant. A master plan to support the relocation of U.S. forces to Guam and an Environmental Impact Statement for the entire region are being drafted and due to be completed later this year.

Mullen stated, "Possible investment opportunities benefiting the CNMI, Guam and the Department of Defense are being reviewed. CNMI resources may be needed to support construction, transportation, and lodging during the infrastructure improvement phase of the relocation. …Additional support may include providing training facilities unavailable on Guam."

In meetings with other top military officials, Tenorio has expressed the CNMI's long-held concern regarding the lack of use of a significant portion of the island of Tinian for the purpose of providing a fallback contingent area for national defense. He has been having ongoing discussions with Maj. Gen. David F. Bice, executive director of the Joint Guam Program Office.

In a recent meeting, the concept of a "warm base" on Tinian which requires the construction of temporary buildings for training facilities, barracks, mess halls, ranges and other structures was discussed. According to Bice, having a warm base on Tinian would ensure a "near continuous" military presence that would provide for economic opportunities for the CNMI and civilian employment.

The ongoing environmental impact study for the entire CNMI, socio-economic studies, possible repair for Tinian's breakwater and other infrastructure improvements were also discussed.

"I am glad to learn that plans are underway in support of the relocation of U.S. forces to Guam that may require the utilization of CNMI resources, including the feasibility of a 'warm base' on Tinian. I trust that it will only be a matter of time before we learn more of the details of these and other plans and I look forward to reviewing them in the near future. I am grateful for the assistance of the Department of Defense in striving to establish a mutually beneficial partnership with the people of the CNMI as the U.S. military carries out this immense relocation process," said Tenorio.

Tenorio said he would have preferred that the Marines be relocated to Tinian instead of Guam as this would have fulfilled the expectations of the Covenant.

A base on Tinian would validate the decision of the Marianas Political Status Commission when they agreed to a long-term lease of 17,800 acres of land on Tinian for future military usage.

"So far, the Department of Defense has alluded to the benefits that we might be receiving due to the relocation of these Marines. However, I see no serious planning involving the use of our limited land resources," he said.

Major land-based military activity, either direct or indirect, in the CNMI could include construction of permanent facilities, repair of Tinian's docks and breakwater, improvements to the water delivery system, as well as increased economic activity that would benefit many small businesses.

"If feel that if DOD does not develop concrete plans for the use of their land on Tinian, then we should request the U.S. Congress to declare these lands as 'surplus property' and be returned to the CNMI," said Tenorio. ***(PR)***

Woman gets two months for burglarizing teacher's house

By FERDIE DELA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David Wiseman ordered a woman yesterday to spend two months in prison for burglarizing a teacher's house on Capital Hill.

Wiseman sentenced Antonette Atalig to five years in jail, all suspended except for 60 days, with credit for the eight days she has already served in prison.

The judge ordered Atalig to start serving the 52 days at the Department of Corrections on April 1, 2008.

Atalig will be required to pay restitution and write a letter of apology to the victims.

Wiseman also directed the defendant to pay a $25 court assessment fee plus a probation fee and perform 150 hours of community work service.

In May 2007, police arrested Atalig, Francin Lucille R. Aldan and two juveniles for breaking into the house of public school teacher Erik Engelskjen and wife Maribel and stealing jewelry, digital camera, and other items.

Atalig and Aldan were then charged with conspiracy to commit burglary, burglary, theft, and criminal mischief.

Atalig signed a plea agreement with the government. She pleaded guilty to burglary and criminal mischief. The remaining charges were dismissed.

According to the plea agreement, on May 15, 2007 Atalig, Aldan and two juveniles entered the residence of the Engelskjen couple by breaking a window.

The defendants removed various items from the house, including jewelry and a digital camera.

Some of the stolen items were later pawned and recovered from Villa Royal Pawnshop. Police said the pawnshop refused to buy the items and called police.

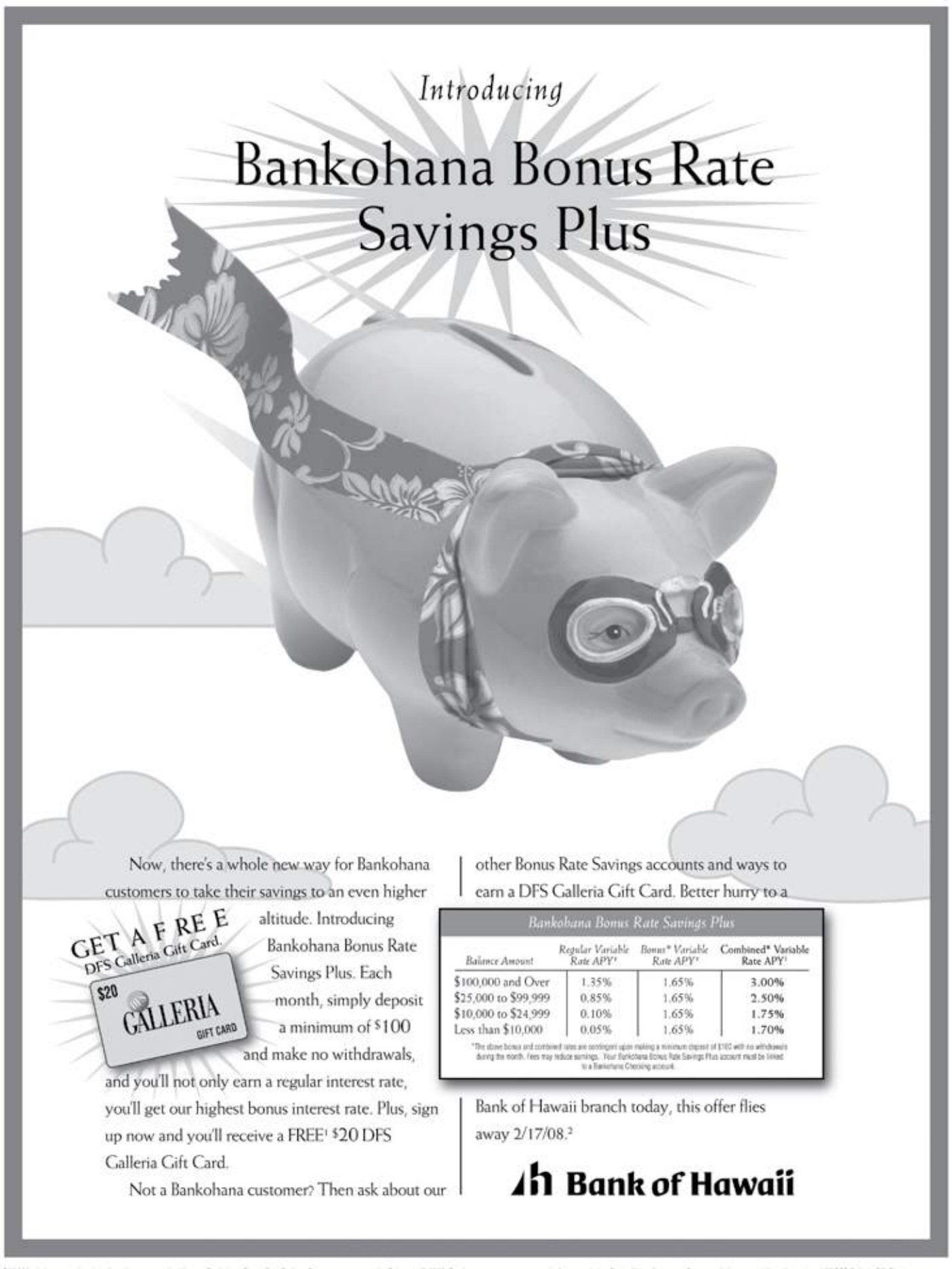
On the same day, police spotted the suspects' vehicle in front of a restaurant in Garapan. Atalig and Aldan, who were both in the car, were arrested.

Some of the stolen items were also recovered from the car and at the pawnshop.

Atalig, who was then eight months pregnant, admitted to the police that they were responsible for the burglary. Aldan has already been sentenced. The case of the minors was sealed.

Saipan Tribune learned that it was actually Mr. Engelskjen who solved the case when he alerted pawnshops on the island about his stolen jewelry and other items. When the pawnshop called him that someone was selling his items, the teacher responded and then called police.

Two months after the burglary, the victims' house was burglarized again, prompting them to move to another house. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***


Introducing
Bankohana Bonus Rate
Savings Plus
Now, there's a whole new way for Bankohana customers to take their savings to an even higher altitude. Introducing Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus. Each month, simply deposit a minimum of $100 and make no withdrawals, and you'll not only earn a regular interest rate, you'll get our highest bonus interest rate. Plus, sign up now and you'll receive a FREE[1] $20 DFS Galleria Gift Card.
Not a Bankohana customer? Then ask about our other Bonus Rate Savings accounts and ways to earn a DFS Galleria Gift Card. Better hurry to a Bank of Hawaii branch today, this offer flies away 2/17/08.[2]
GET A FREE
DFS Galleria Gift Card.
$20
GALLERIA
GIFT CARD
Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus
Balance Amount | Regular Variable Rate APY[1] | Bonus* Variable Rate APY[1] | Combined* Variable Rate APY[1]
$100,000 and Over | 1.35% | 1.65% | 3.00%
$25,000 to $99,999 | 0.85% | 1.65% | 2.50%
$10,000 to $24,999 | 0.10% | 1.65% | 1.75%
Less than $10,000 | 0.05% | 1.65% | 1.70%
*The above bonus and combined rates are contingent upon making a minimum deposit of $100 with no withdrawals during the month. Fees may reduce earnings. Your Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus account must be linked to a Bankohana Checking account.
Bank of Hawaii
[1] $5,000 minimum opening deposit and balance required for new Bankohana Bonus Rate Savings Plus accounts opened by February 17, 2008. Funds to open account may not be from an existing Bank of Hawaii account. Some restrictions apply. You will receive a $20 DFS Galleria Gift Card upon account opening. Limit one $20 DFS Galleria Gift Card per account regardless of the number of accountholders. Limit one per customer. Not available for existing accounts. Good while supplies last. [2] Current Annual Percentage Yields accurate as of 2/01/08 and subject to change without notice. Interest rates and APYs may change after the account is opened. Fees may reduce earnings. Some restrictions apply.
boh.com ©2007 Bank of Hawaii Member FDIC

DEQ raises red flag at 5 Saipan beaches

The Division of Environmental Quality has raised the red flag on five beach sites on Saipan and advises the public not to fish or swim within 300 feet of these locations for the next 48 hours or until otherwise notified.

Affected beaches are the Marine Beach, Hidden Beach, North Laulau Beach, Jeffries Beach, and Unai Dangkulo.

Samples collected from these locations were found to contain concentrations of fecal indicator bacteria (enterococci) that exceeded the CNMI Marine Water Quality Standards. These bacteria can indicate the presence of human and animal waste in the water.

However, studies have shown that storm water runoff in tropical environments may also contain these bacteria from the natural environment, which may not be directly associated with the public health concerns.

DEQ analyzed water samples collected from 12 Saipan east and south recreational beaches this week.

DEQ welcomes all inquiries as to the quality of the beach water. The public is encouraged to contact DEQ at 664-8500 with any questions. ***(DEQ)***

LAMP OF KNOWLEDGE

The flame of central candle (the lamp of knowledge) is lit up during the Garapan Elementary School National Junior Honor Society Induction Ceremony at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe Saturday.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Fit for Life walking event reset

The Health Planning Committee for the Joeten Charitable Foundation: Families Fit For Life Walk issued a statement yesterday about the postponement of the walk schedule for Saturday, March 1, 2008 at 5pm. The committee will be issuing a new schedule for the walking event within a few weeks. As a reminder, this will be strictly a walking event only. ***(PR)***

NMI DB to DC conversion meetings

The ASC Trust Corp. has scheduled meetings for the conversion of eligible government employees from the defined benefit plan to the defined contribution plan under the government's retirement program.

The meetings will be held at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe on Thursday, Feb. 28, 2008, with three separate sessions:

- Session 1: am - 9:30am
- Session 2: 2pm - 3:30pm
- Session 3: 5pm - 6:30pm

These group meetings are being held for those eligible DB members as well as for those interested in learning more about the transfer.

An eligible DB member is an employee with less than 10 years of credited service with the CNMI Government. Once you have become 10 years vested with the government, you are no longer considered an eligible employee who can convert. The window to convert your DB account ends on July 25, 2008.

Contact the ASC Saipan branch manager, Tania Mesa, at (670) 235-2724 to reserve a spot for one of the sessions. You can also e-mail Mesa at tania.mesa@ascpac.com. Seats are limited and will be reserved on a first come, first serve basis. ***(ASC)***

Zoning Board solicits suggested changes to zoning law

The Zoning Board said that it will soon be evaluating suggestions for changes to the Saipan Zoning Law of 2007. A draft package of proposed changes will be circulated for public review, revised, and then forwarded to the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation for their consideration.

The public can help the Board by sending recommendations for changing the Zoning Law text or maps (rezones) by March 14. Submit recommendations to staff@zoning.gov.mp, or mail or deliver them to the Zoning Office.

Copies of the law are available at the zoning website (www.zoning.gov.mp) or can be viewed or purchased from the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan. The Zoning Office will be pleased to answer any questions about the law. ***(PR)***

Parenting, childhood disorders seminar

The CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities will be celebrating March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. This year's theme is "SUCCESS-When Doors Open- We succeed!"

On Monday, March 3, 2008, CGC psychiatrist Dr. Willie Gutowski will conduct a presentation on Normal Parenting Issue and Common Childhood Disorders. All parents and teachers are encouraged to take this opportunity to attend this presentation.

To register, call the Council office at 664-7000/7001/7003/7005/7041 or fax registration form to 664-7030. ***(PR)***

Council cautions mowers, bush cutters

The 10th Saipan & Northern Islands Municipal Council gave notice to the public, especially the operators of tractor mower, brush cutting machinery and mechanized chain saw whose work is performed under the auspices of the CNMI or local government agencies, including private contractors operating along the major highways and secondary roadways, including walkways of pathways, to always exercise due diligence in taking every necessary precautionary safety measure against causing serious injuries to people and properties passing by or in close proximity to the affected public premises or private work sites. ***(PR)***

PAWS Kids' Night Out is back!

For parents, enjoy some special time to yourselves! For kids, join in the fun, food, and friends. The PAWS Kids' Night out will be held on Friday, Feb. 29, 6pm – 10pm, at the Whimsy Room of the Saipan Grand Hotel. The cost is $10 for the first child, and $5 for each additional sibling, ages 3-12.

Check in is at 6pm – 6:30pm (No drop offs after 6:30). Pick up is by 10pm but early pickups are welcome.

Register via phone at 285-PAWS (285-7297) or via email at melissasimms56@hotmail.com. This event is sponsored by the Saipan Grand Hotel. ***(PAWS)***

Mificpa tax seminar on March 1

The Marianas Institute of Filipino CPAs and Accountants has invited David Burger to conduct a tax seminar on March 1, 2008, Saturday, from 8am to 12pm, at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. Burger is the chairman of CNMI Board of Accountancy.

The topics will include an overview of the preparation of Form 1040CM-Individual Income Tax Return and Form 1120CM-Corporate Income Tax Return. Also, recent updates and developments prescribed by the CNMI Revenue & Taxation as well as the United States Internal Revenue Code on Corporate Taxation will be discussed.

All accountants, members and non-members are encouraged to attend this current and informative seminar. The managers and other professional individuals who seek to get more information with these tax returns are also welcome.

A seminar fee of $10 for members and $12 for non-members is required. Proceeds will go to selected charitable/civic organization.

For registration, call Irene at 287-7997, Lois at 235-9322 or Jho at 285-2812. ***(Mificpa)***

Meeting of Autism Society of the CNMI

The Autism Society of the CNMI will be holding its monthly meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 27, 2008 at 5:30pm at the Herman's Bakery Conference Room. Information regarding the group and future meetings will be available at this meeting. All families and friends of children with autism are invited to attend.

For additional information, call John at 234-8803/4 or Larrisa at 322-3761 or send an email to as_cnmi@yahoo.com. ***(PR)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

FEBRUARY 27, 2001

2-year job contract for aliens proposed

If the government is really serious about creating a business-friendly environment in the CNMI, it should begin with implementing an amended policy on the employment contracts of nonresident workers. Rota Mayor Benjamin T. Manglona is proposing that the government refine existing policies that relate to the employment contracts of nonresident workers to make it applicable for a two-year period, instead of the current one-year coverage.

Total ban on tobacco use in NMI restaurants sought

Implementation of stricter programs on anti-tobacco use in restaurants and other business establishments throughout the islands may jeopardize increased efforts to lure more visitors into the Northern Marianas. This same concern prompted the Department of Public Health to call for a review by the Legislature of such policy's possible impacts in the local tourism industry.

DOF sued for failure to pay tax refunds

A local business entity has leveled a lawsuit against the Department of Finance for alleged failure to grant a complete refund of all excise taxes the plaintiff claims it is entitled to since 2000. Plaintiff Island Apparel has termed the finance department's alleged refusal to release its business tax rebate as an "adverse decision" that has denied the company complete refund of all excise taxes paid on apparel and other goods it has imported and exported in and out of the CNMI.

FEBRUARY 27, 2002

Few Japanese think NMI is a fairly-priced destination

Only 16.7 percent of Japanese tourists who visited the Northern Marianas in January 2001 and 17.96 percent in January 2002 believed that the CNMI's tourist destinations are fairly priced. A Marianas Visitors Authority-administered exit survey released Monday disclosed that majority of Japanese travelers who visited the islands said they came here to relax and enjoy various sport activities.

Landfill construction in full swing next week

In line with the government's efforts to abate the looming garbage crisis on Saipan, the contractor for the Marpi landfill project said it would go full blast with actual work on the project next week, with the commitment to beat the December deadline to complete the facility. In another development, the issue on the needed revision on a federal permit in connection with an endangered species on the landfill site has already been resolved.

Heinz to CSC: Hey, relax!

The Civil Service Commission's March 15 deadline for the passage of corrective amendments to Public Law 13-1 has raised the hackles of House Speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider, who said yesterday that setting a deadline for the passage of any legislation is not "right." Hofschneider conceded that Public Law 13-1 may be defective to the extent that it is vague and ambiguous and, if not clarified, could create some hardships in the decision-making process at the commission.

FEBRUARY 27, 2004

NGA backs NMI's delegate bid

In preparation for this week's hearing on the potential for a Northern Marianas delegate in Congress, Gov. Juan N. Babauta has succeeded in having the National Governor Association renew its support for the grant of such a status. "I am very grateful for the support the nation's governors have shown for the people of the Northern Marianas," said Babauta after the vote approving the delegate policy. "I'm particularly grateful to Governors Association chairman Dirk Kempthorne. Because of his previous experience as a member of the U.S. Senate committee with responsibility for the U.S. insular areas, Governor Kempthorne understands the issue of representation for the Northern Marianas."

'No need for oversight hearing on NMC'

House Education Committee chairman Justo Quitugua said yesterday that he has no plans to subject the Northern Marianas College to an oversight hearing, despite information he gathered confirming the institution's serious financial woes. "We're not going to do an oversight. We want to give the college more opportunity to refocus," said Quitugua.

i Sagua Spa introduces banana leaf wrap

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The i Sagua Spa at Hyatt Regency Saipan has another signature treatment available for off-island guests as well as the local community.

Spa manager Vicky Benavente said their banana leaf wrap has been a big hit since the hotel chain introduced the treatment earlier this month.

The treatment involves, as its name already suggests, banana leaves wrapped around the body after the masseuse has applied a mixture of brown sugar, honey, and lime juice.

Benavente said the brown, sugar, and lime juice concoction—followed by the 35-minute banana wrap—is guaranteed to exfoliate, hydrate, and sooth sensitive skin.

To top it off, i Sagua Spa's highly trained and professional therapists will pamper guests with a relaxing head, neck, and shoulder massage—certain to melt away all the tension and stiffness from your body.

Benavente said quite a few of Hyatt Regency Saipan's in-house guests—Japanese, Koreans, and Russians—have already tried the banana leaf wrap treatment after being intrigued by i Sagua Spa's promotional flyer.

She added that guests from the local community have also availed of the treatment, and much like guests from overseas, majority of them are raving about its benefits—radiant- looking and smooth skin and overall good disposition immediately following the banana left wrap.

Benavente said i Sagua Spa has been receiving a lot of compliments for the facility's use of indigenous materials; and the banana leaf wrap is no exception. She also volunteered that Hyatt Regency Saipan has contacted a local cooperative to supply the spa with all the plants and herbs it uses throughout the year.

strengthening the body and mind with new energy for instant, lasting invigoration.

i Sagua Spa, which means "channel of water" in Chamorro, occupies a 7,700-square-foot space at Hyatt Regency Saipan and had its soft opening in Dec. 21, 2007.

It is part of Hyatt Pure, which is a worldwide collection of extraordinary spas worldwide, ranging from urban to resort setting.

Each spa is custom designed to embrace the local environment and culture to provide an authentic indigenous experience.

For reservations and more information, call i Sagua Spa at 323-5888or 234-1234 ext. 35.

i Sagua Spa's banana leaf wrap is guaranteed to exfoliate, hydrate, and sooth sensitive skin, giving guests a pleasant and unforgettable experience.
MARK RABAGO

i Sagua Spa's four concepts

All treatments at i Sagua Spa, according to Benavente, adhere to the spa's four concepts, which is to nourish, restore, cleanse, and energize.

To nourish is to flood the body with natural serenity and fortify every cell with essential nutrients, while restore is defined as allowing stress and tension to fall away for optimal well-being and increased vitality.

Cleanse means resetting and transforming body and spirit with natural purifying treatments, while energize is

Free health screening for OFWs

The Philippine Consulate General, in cooperation with volunteer Filipino medical team and Hardt Eye Clinic, will conduct a free health screening for Filipino workers on the island on March 2, 2008 (Sunday) from 7am to 12pm at the ground floor of the Marianas Business Plaza (formerly Nauru Bldg.) in Susupe.

Medical services include: 1) Vision check-up 2) determination of blood pressure and sugar level.

OFWs who would like to have their blood sugar tested must refrain from eating and drinking water and any fluids from midnight of March 1, 2008 up to the time of their scheduled check up the following day. ***(PR)***

PTI Your connection to the world

PTI is looking for qualified Universal Service Representatives. The successful candidates will be highly client focused and have one to two years experience in customer service / sales.

Applicant must have:

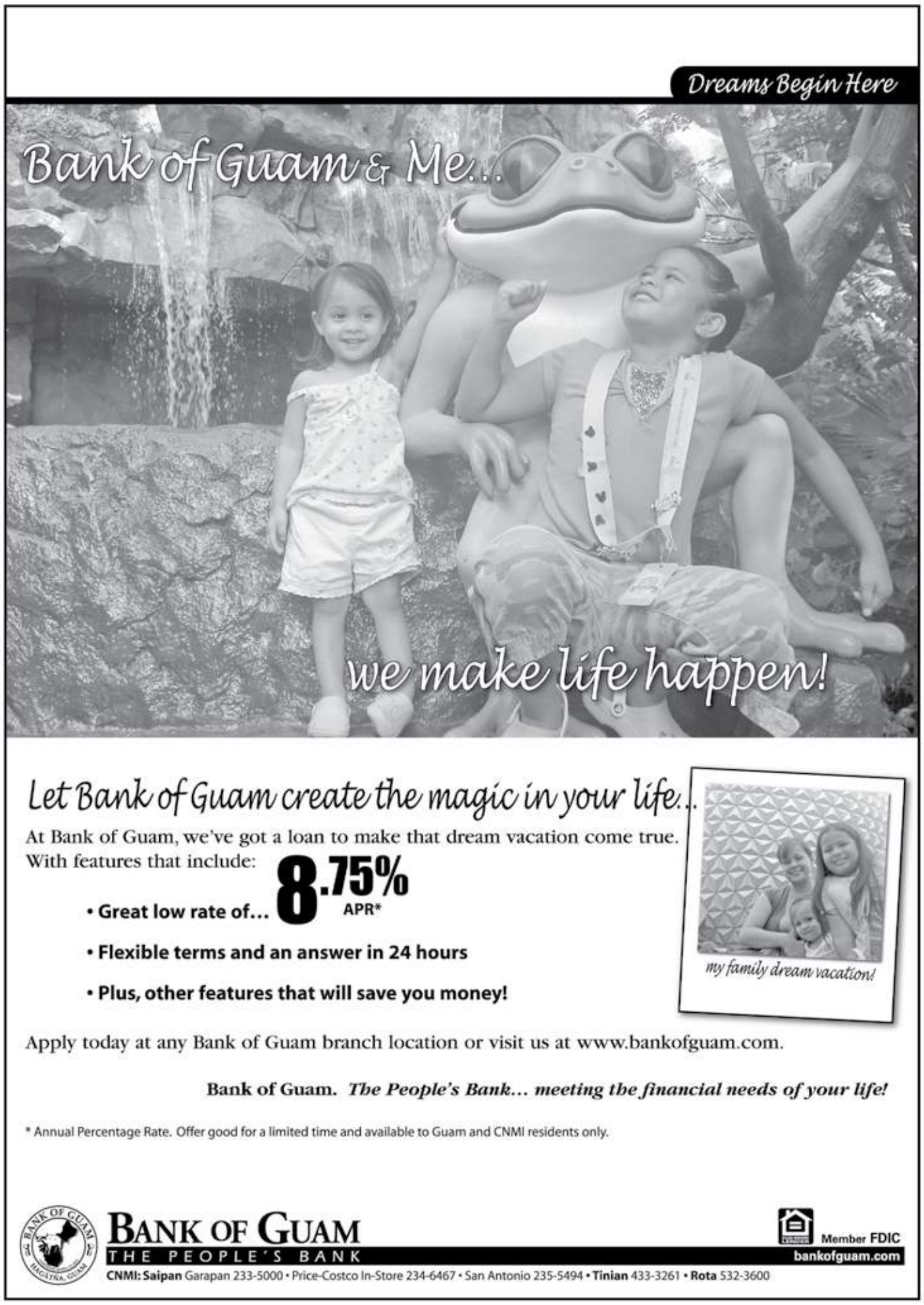
- A high school diploma or equivalent
- Strong English verbal and written skills
- Strong listening skills and attention to detail
- Friendly and motivated personality
- The ability to handle customer inquires and request for services, billing and collection.
- The ability to make recommendations to satisfy a customer's product and services needs.
- U.S. Citizenship

Hired individuals will receive very competitive wages and will be eligible for health care benefits.

Interested candidates must complete a PTI application by Friday, February 29, 2007 and submit it to

PTI – Susupe Office
Attn: Human Resources
Post Office Box 500306 CK
Saipan MP 96950
Tel : 670-234-6600
Fax: 670-235-9559

PTI is an Equal Opportunity Employer
Women, Minorities and Veterans are encouraged to apply.



Let Bank of Guam create the magic in your life...

At Bank of Guam, we've got a loan to make that dream vacation come true. With features that include:

- Great low rate of... 8.75% APR*
- Flexible terms and an answer in 24 hours
- Plus, other features that will save you money!

Apply today at any Bank of Guam branch location or visit us at www.bankofguam.com.

Bank of Guam. *The People's Bank... meeting the financial needs of your life!*

* Annual Percentage Rate. Offer good for a limited time and available to Guam and CNMI residents only.

BANK OF GUAM
THE PEOPLE'S BANK
Member FDIC
bankofguam.com
CNMI: Saipan Garapan 233-5000 • Price-Costco In-Store 234-6467 • San Antonio 235-5494 • Tinian 433-3261 • Rota 532-3600

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XVIII, Issue No. 58

Published daily at 2/F CIC Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

Lynn A. Knight PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER
The Associated Press Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Lip-reading, again

John McCain didn't say "read my lips," but he might as well have. "So on taxes, are you a `read my lips' candidate, no new taxes, no matter what?" ABC's George Stephanopoulos asked him last week. "No new taxes," pledged the Arizona senator and presumptive Republican nominee. This may be good politics when the GOP base is edgy and still smarting over Mr. McCain's votes against the Bush tax cuts, in 2001 and 2003. But it's a dangerous straitjacket into which to put your potential presidency.

Contrast this with McCain 2001, who said, quite correctly, "I cannot in good conscience support a tax cut in which so many of the benefits go to the most fortunate among us, at the expense of middle-class Americans who most need tax relief." Or McCain 2003, who called further tax cuts "irresponsible," adding, "At a time of war, at a time of economic stagnation, at a time of rising national debt ... one might expect our national leaders to pursue policies calling for shared sacrifice to achieve shared benefits. Regrettably, that is not the case." Or McCain 2004, who said, "I voted against the tax cuts because of the disproportionate amount that went to the wealthiest Americans. I would clearly support not extending those tax cuts in order to help address the deficit."

We sure do miss that guy. He's been gone since 2006, when he voted to extend the Bush tax cuts for capital gains and dividends, arguing that "American businesses and investors need a stable and predictable tax policy." Ever since, Mr. McCain has hewed with increasing fealty to the strict Republican Party line: All tax cuts, no matter how unaffordable or unfair at the start, must be preserved; no tax increases may be considered; further tax cuts should be on the table.

Mr. McCain's explanation of his evolution features some less than straight talk. He argues that he initially opposed tax cutsbecause "I said, look, we've got to have spending restraint." Mr. McCain talked about controlling spending during his first presidential campaign, but that was not his point at the time the tax cuts were being debated.

More troubling, however, is the substance of the new McCain position, which amounts to more than $4 trillion in lost revenue over the next decade; Len Burman of the nonpartisan Tax Policy Center estimates that by 2018 tax receipts would be at an unsustainable 16.6 percent of gross domestic product, down from 18.8 percent in 2007. Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama have proposed their own tax cuts, but they look modest in comparison to Mr. McCain's.

Mr. McCain would extend the Bush tax cuts, at a 10-year cost of more than $2 trillion. He would also eliminate the alternative minimum tax altogether—an additional $1.6 trillion. He would cut the top corporate tax rate from 35 percent to 25 percent (not a bad idea if various corporate loopholes were tackled at the same time) and add other incentives for business investment. Mr. McCain talks about making up the gap by clamping down on spending—tackling entitlements, reining in health-care costs, streamlining defense procurement, eliminating earmarks. Nice ideas, hard to pull off—and, as the old McCain would have argued, better to show the spending restraint first.

In addition, the new McCain believes that raising taxes should require a three-fifths majority vote in Congress—as if more gridlock were needed. And, of course, if some tax increase were to slip through, he has pledged to oppose it under any circumstances. Given the needs of government in the coming decade, this is a pledge we suspect a President McCain would soon regret.

© 2008, The Washington Post

More of the 100 Steps! 51-55

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT *Creating economic success for the CNMI*

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

The following is a continuing excerpt from a previously unreleased book titled *The 100 Steps Necessary for Business Success* by Walt F.J. Goodridge. It is provided exclusively to Saipan Tribune readers!

STEP 51: SHAKE the MONEY TREE.

According to Robert Allen, author of *Multiple Streams of Income*, the perfect business needs to be a money tree. Each letter of the phrase "money tree" represents a quality or feature that the perfect business should possess in order to survive and thrive.

***M**ultiple*—Your business must create multiple streams of income for you

***O**utstanding*—Your product or service must be outstanding in its field.

***N**o Money Down*—Your business should require little or no money down as an initial investment.

***E**mployee-Resistant*—The less employees your business requires, the safer, the easier and the more profitable it will be.

***Y**ield* should be high—You must be in an industry and have a profit margin that produces a high profit yield.

***T**imely*—Your product or service should be timely.

***R**esidual*—Your business should create residual streams of income for you.

***E**ssential*—What you provide should be essential, or at least people must feel that it is.

***E**nthusiasm*—In order to survive and thrive in business, you must be enthusiastic about what you do.

STEP 52: BECOME an empire builder.

Every idea that you have has the potential to be the basis of an empire. When I wrote my first book to help music entrepreneurs in the rap industry start their own record label, I immediately started thinking about extending the concept to apply to other types of music as well. I envisioned books for gospel, rock, jazz and rhythm & blues musicians. It was this sort of vision that always drove me to create new products along the same original theme. Today, the empire has become the "Turn Your Passion Into Profit" line of products. To build your own empire, you must become a possibility thinker. You must think in terms of sequels, 2nd editions, translations into other languages, modifications for different ethnic groups, religions, special interests, children, movie rights, calendars, mugs, clothing and even food! You must ask yourself, which other target audience could I sell to using the same concept. What other types of products could lend themselves to being marketed under the same theme as my original idea? A prime example of this type of "empire thinking" is Jack Canfield's *Chicken Soup for the Soul* series of books. There are now Chicken Soup for the golfer's, mother's, writer's, children's, and probably even chicken's souls! Just kidding, Jack! From the onset of your business, you should be an empire thinker

STEP 53: INCREASE your prices as you narrow your focus.

This step is based on the concept that your time as well as your expertise become more valuable as they become more personal and more specialized. When you sell general information, you can afford to charge lower prices that the masses can afford. When you begin to sell your consulting expertise and personal time, your prices should go up.

For example, let's say that you are an expert in cooking. Your observations on the state of the restaurant industry can be the cheapest "product" you offer. You can give away those thoughts in the form of free reports, or you can charge a nominal fee ($1 per word) to publications who wish to print them for their readers. When you offer recipes of your own creation, you can charge more (say, $39.95) in the form of a cookbook. When you give a lecture at a culinary institute, you can charge even more (say, $5,000) for your expertise. When you cater an event, the price goes up even further. When you

See MORE on next page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Letters to the Editor

Tinian Quarantine explains procedures

This is in response to the article that appeared on the *Marianas Variety* Feb. 25, 2008, "Farmers want smuggled pesticides probed."

Here is a breakdown on what we (Quarantine) do here on Tinian in regards to inspecting containers from foreign countries.

We conduct a vessel clearance before any containers are offloaded. This is to ensure that all cargo listed on cargo manifest is accounted for. Then as the containers are offloaded we verify each container number and container seal with each bill of lading that was given to us prior to offloading. After all documents and numbers have been verified we then schedule the containers for clearance.

During the clearance we verify the contents of the containers with the owners. The owners are to provide us with a list/invoice of what is inside the container(s). Let's say for example, 123XYZ Supermart has imported one 40' container of general merchandise. So what we do, along with our counterparts at Tinian Customs, is account for every item that is listed on that invoice. This is to ensure that they are not bringing in other items that are not listed on the invoice.

Let's say that we do encounter pesticides. The first thing that we do is check the invoice and that they have the proper documents to import pesticides. This will include MSDS (Materials Safety Data Sheet). Second, the pesticide must be in English and must have an EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) registration number that is located on the package/bottle. And finally, the importer must show proof that they are licensed within the CNMI to import and use the said pesticides.

In the past we have encountered individuals and businesses that didn't have the proper documents. So what we did is we held the cargo and turned it over to the proper agency, which in this case was DEQ.

Finally I would like to say in defense of my fellow Quarantine Personnel that we inspect every foreign container that lands here on Tinian 100 percent. If you have any information of individuals or businesses smuggling contraband into the CNMI let the proper agency know, so we or the proper agency can put a stop to it.

Richard DLC. Farrell
Officer in Charge
Quarantine Section, Tinian

Questions for Fr. Billotti

The question is, are you speaking on behalf of the Catholic Diocese? Are you condoning the actions of Sr. Stella Mangona and Wendy Doromal calling people racist? Are these the teachings of the Ten Commandments? And since when has the Catholic Church gotten involved in politics?

After careful studies and research on the activities of Guma Esperanza, Karidat, Sisters of the Good Shepherd, Wendy Doromal, Sr. Stella Mangona, and Lauri Ogomoru, we have concluded that these organizations are all federally funded and it is obvious that there had been a collusion to instigate the passage of federal legislation H.R.3079.

The untimely departure of Mr. David Cohen from the Department of the Interior also raises questions whether he had a falling out with Senate staffer Allen Stayman. We must all remember that Mr. Cohen is a sincere and passive person who probably could not handle the injustices left behind in the instructions by Allen Stayman.

The movements of everyone involved has left much dissensions, divisions and animosities in the community between nonresident guest workers and the locals, to include a reputation instilled in our homeland and televised nationwide that we are an abusive people. Innocent people were used and victimized by the Good Shepherd [and] Allen Stayman in their quest to federalize our local control of immigration. We must remind you that a lot of misdeeds, lies, controversies, and misconceptions had taken place here in our homeland.

Furthermore we suggest that you thoroughly read the Sisters of the Good Shepherd's testimonies before the congressional hearing and ask yourself these questions:

■ Why did the Department of the Interior's Insular Affairs instruct Guma Esperanza to garner 50 or more human trafficking cases in a three-year span, as part of a mission on federal grants given?

■ Is it fair that religious organizations that are federally funded be instigating such cases?

■ Is it fair that victims of domestic violence or minor labor complaints are being turned into overly exaggerated human smuggling cases?

With all due respect, the list is long and we do not have time to waste addressing your one-sided biased interpretation of the situation beforehand. We suggest that the Catholic religious organizations refrain from further involvement in a political democratic process for it is completely beyond your religious teachings and mission.

Being raised as a Catholic, this is not the teachings or the way of the Catholic religion I grew up knowing. I urge you to refrain from using your priesthood to gain sympathy from the community for it is also highly inappropriate.

Gregorio Cruz Jr.
President
Taotao Tano CNMI Inc.

Discretionary funds fly *under* the radar

In the February 26 edition of the *Variety*, Mr. Donald Cohen hit the proverbial "nail on the head" with a resounding blow. And it has been suggested to me by more than one concerned citizen that current practices concerning the "discretionary fund" allotment borders on felonious, if not simply downright criminal. If the Legislature and this entire government want to be taken seriously and respected, then they must act in a manner that is professional, transparent and fiduciary.

The best place to start would be to fully report all discretionary expenditures truthfully, accurately and in a timely manner. That's basic. That's simple. That's honest. And no doubt most of us feel it is the right thing to do. What say you, Legislature? And you Administration? How about a date by which it really begins to happen? Let's see what happens when the "talking is done." Tina Sablan may be younger than most all of you, but she has it right and she walks her talk.

Perry Conner
As Matuis

An open letter to the Senate president

Dear Senator Pete Reyes:

I applaud your and Congressman Hofschneider's efforts to reduce the legislative numbers and salary, and your support of making a part-time Legislature. I can only hope that other members of the Legislature will see the necessity of these proposals, especially during such critical economic times. The voters will undoubtedly remember those who have worked toward curbing legislative spending.

I also respectfully ask that, as part of that effort, you would work toward greatly reducing the unnecessary travel and junkets by department heads, legislators, etc. Many letters have been written about this and it is well known among the community that junkets are rampant. Please stem this overuse of taxpayer's money for unnecessary travel expenditures and use the money toward a permanent CUC fix, improvement in schools, etc. It would be good for the community...and good for you. A win-win situation, I would think.

People are more than ready to praise efforts to reduce spending in the government and condemn those who continue to waste tax monies. It is long past time to stop looking at gambling as a "cure-all", and to work toward rooting out non-working government employees, trimming fat, reduce spending, and leading the people of Saipan toward a healthy economy. It can be done. Keep up the good work.

Bill Weiss
Puerto Rico, Saipan

'Enact anti-animal cruelty law now'

In her letter to Sen. Pete Reyes, sixth grader Aprilleen Sablan (Letters to Editor, Feb. 3, 2008) eloquently expressed why the anti-animal cruelty law must be passed. Humane Society International has previously supported this specific law and was discouraged to find it placed on the back burner.

As Aprilleen points out, "…the CNMI Legislature should pass the Anti-Animal Cruelty Law because the people of the CNMI aren't treating animals the way they should be treated...If you pass this law the CNMI would be a better place." Indeed, this law would encourage citizens to report cruelty, neglect and abandonment of animals because they know that there is a law that can be enforced.

The connection between cruelty to animals and human violence is well-documented. Laws that protect animals and firmly punish animal abusers will no doubt positively change these important social problems by recognizing that all violence—against human and animal—is linked.

In addition, dog bites, the spread of zoonotic diseases, animal abuse and other problems neighborhoods are now witnessing can be remedied by working with local activists and Pet Assistance and Welfare Services on long-term, humane solutions.

All of this starts with the passage of strong, comprehensive and reliable animal protection laws.

Carly Ikuma
Humane Society International
The Humane Society of the United States
2100 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037 USA

MORE

From Page 10

host weekend workshops for an exclusive clientele for whom you will make your secret recipes, you can charge them thousands for the privilege of your personal attention! In much the same way, any business owner can create different levels of offerings to the public.

STEP 54: LEARN the Law of Obligation

The Law of Obligation simply says "There ain't none!" No one is obligated to do anything simply because you want them to. Remember this and you will save yourself much heartache. Remember, unhappiness is nothing but an unmet expectation.

Whether in business or life in general, people really aren't obligated by YOUR sense of right and wrong, to do what YOU want them to. We all live in a society in which we hope the accepted standards of conduct will be adhered to by everyone. We hope people will say "please" and "thank you."

We hope others will take our concerns seriously, hold up their end of a bargain, return our calls on time, pay back what they owe, allow us to merge into traffic, hold the door open for us, treat us as we treat them, patronize our business, and so on. In our daily interactions with others, we hope people will play along with our game plan, and often get upset if they don't. The truth is, however, these are just our opinions and expectations of what others should do. Remember, unhappiness is nothing but an unmet expectation. Can you accept that others will do as they please? Can you still keep smiling when you don't get your way? Can you give up the victim game and stop waiting for someone to treat you the way you want? If you can, you might find the road a little less bumpy and less aggravating. Now, that doesn't mean you'll accept abuse. You won't allow yourself to be taken advantage of. And you'll remove yourself from destructive people and situations as soon as possible. And for heaven's sake, don't lower your expectations of people so much as simply detach yourself from the outcome. You might be surprised how liberating it might be! Keep doing what you know to be right, and know that all will be balanced... if not from "him" or "her," but through another.

STEP 55: TITHE.

Tithing is the act of giving a percentage of one's income back to the source of one's spiritual support. Many people tithe to their churches. Others tithe to individuals from whom they derive their spiritual sustenance. Still others donate a percentage of gross income to organizations whose mission they want to support. Wherever you choose to give, you'll find that the act giving will, in ways that seem miraculous, create more wealth for you. Those who have practiced tithing have reported tremendous positive results in their finances, relationships, health and careers.

The word itself, with its origins in biblical times, means "tenth". Consequently, many tithers habitually return a tenth of their gross income to their church, synagogue or spiritual teacher. Others tithe much more. Some have been known to tithe as much as 50 percent of what they earn.

Think of tithing as planting seeds of prosperity. The farmer knows that when he reaps his harvest, that he must return a portion of it to the soil in order to continue to reap a harvest in coming years. If you continuously take and take without giving back, eventually the flow of abundance will stop. On the other hand, when a person tithes, the universe which works under the spiritual law of tithing says, "If you have that much to give, that means you are open to receive more."

For more tips on building and growing your business, visit www.passion-profit.com!

■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passion-profit.com.

The Weather

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲82° ▼75°	▲81° ▼75°	▲82° ▼75°	▲81° ▼73°	▲80° ▼74°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Mostly Cloudy	▲84	▼76
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86	▼77
Yap	Mostly Sunny	▲88	▼77
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲87	▼79
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	▲85	▼73
Kosrae	Partly Sunny	▲89	▼76
Majuro	Sunny	▲86	▼75

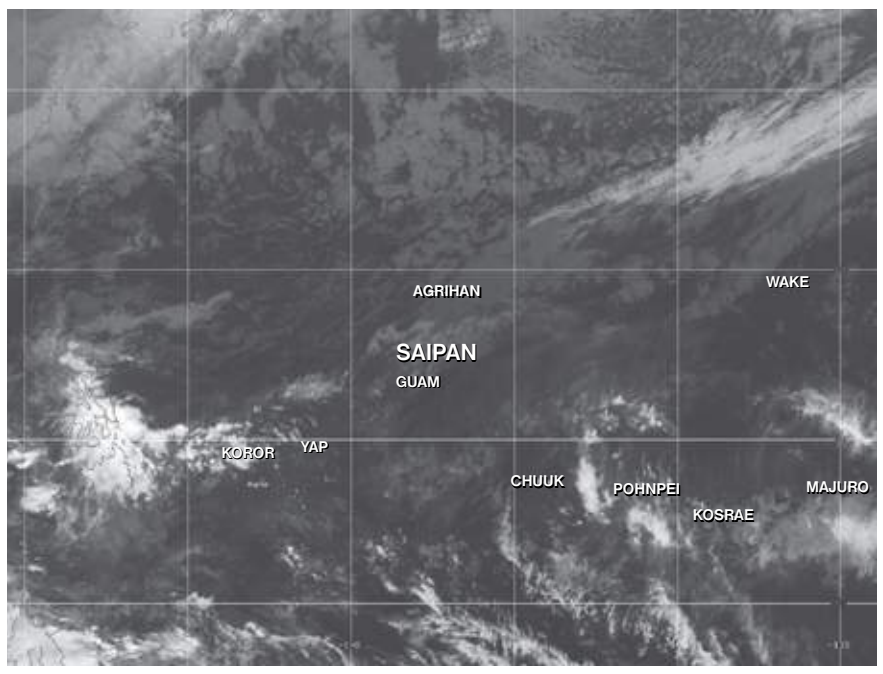
Around The Globe

Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲71	▼60
Beijing	Sunny	▲50	▼32
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲65	▼58
Honolulu	Showers	▲77	▼67
London	Partly Sunny	▲52	▼30
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲73	▼53
Manila	Thunderstorms	▲81	▼73
Melbourne	Partly Sunny	▲69	▼48
Miami	Thunderstorms	▲71	▼48
New York	Flurries	▲37	▼21
Osaka	Cloudy	▲41	▼33
Paris	Cloudy	▲49	▼34
Pusan	Mostly Sunny	▲49	▼26
Rome	Cloudy	▲61	▼46
Salem	Showers	▲54	▼38
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲62	▼48
Seoul	Sunny	▲43	▼22
Tokyo	Showers	▲47	▼35
Washington, DC	Cloudy	▲38	▼25

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
05:14AM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
10:51AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
06:15PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, FEB. 26, 2008
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front north of Wake Island extends southwestward from 25N170E to 20N156E then continues as a shear line to Saipan to beyond 130E at 8N. Extensive cloudiness and scattered showers are occurring along and up to 200 miles northwest of the cold front and within 150 miles of the shear line. An elongated surface trough found between Chuuk and Pohnpei is producing scattered showers between 3N and 13N from 153E to 161E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers south of Majuro within 100 miles of a line from 4N164E to 4N176E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:36AM	6:24PM
Thursday	6:35AM	6:24PM
Friday	6:35AM	6:24PM
Saturday	6:34AM	6:25PM
Sunday	6:34AM	6:25PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	11:28PM	10:11AM
Thursday		10:54AM
Friday	12:20AM	11:40AM
Saturday	01:13AM	12:30PM
Sunday	02:06AM	01:23PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 15, 2008

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO 9313	8:30am	9:05am	3,4,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9597	8:30am	9:20am	1,2,5,6
CO9313	8:30am	10:00am	3,4,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 078	8:25am	1:30pm	Daily via Nagoya
NW 075	4:50pm	7:30pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
NW 083	4:30pm	7:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:25am	11:05am	Daily
Saipan-Manila			
CO 895	4:45pm	6:35pm	6
CO 895	6:45pm	8:35pm	3
Saipan-Seoul			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2,4,6,7
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	4:00am	7:35am	1,4,5,7
Saipan-Guanzhou			
CZ 3008	5:00am	8:00am	2,6
Saipan-Shanghai			
MU 590	4:20am	7:00am	2,6
Guam-Manila			
CO 891	6:00am	10:30am	3 via Yap and Koror
CO 893	6:30am	8:05am	6
CO 893	8:25am	10:00am	2,7
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:45am	1,2,4,6,7
Guam-Hongkong			
CO 909	7:45pm	10:40pm	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	10:15am	10:45am	1,2,6

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	11:10am	11:45am	1,2,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	Daily
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9598	10:15am	11:45am	1,2,6 via Rota
CO9600	10:45am	11:35am	3,4,5,7
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:35am	3:05pm	Daily
NW 077	6:15pm	1:10am+1	Daily via Nagoya
Osaka-Saipan			
NW 084	10:40am	3:10pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Manila-Saipan			
CO 890	9:15am	2:55pm	6
CO 890	11:45am	5:35pm	3
Seoul-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:30pm	2,4,6,7
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:30pm	2:50am+1	3,4,6,7
Guanzhou-Saipan			
CZ 3007	8:00pm	4:00am+1	1,5
Shanghai-Saipan			
MU 589	8:05pm	3:00am+1	1,5
Manila-Guam			
CO 894	11:20am	4:55pm	2,7
CO 894	7:45pm	1:20am+1	6
CO 892	9:45pm	5:25am+1	3 via Koror
CO 892	9:45pm	6:30am+1	3 via Koror and Yap
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:15pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Hongkong-Guam			
CO 910	11:40pm	6:20am+1	1,5
Rota-Guam			
CO 9313	9:30am	10:00am	3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Sunday, Saipan Tribune offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $182. Off-island subscription rate is $376 per year. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

Island Snapshots

MEDIA FRENZY
Japanese media personnel wait for Kazuyoshi Miura inside the CNMI Superior Court in Susupe.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ
Japanese media crowd a Department of Corrections van thinking that Japanese businessman Kazuyoshi Miura was inside. It turned out that other local suspects were in it.

'WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS'
Team PTC members pose with Pacific Trading Co. general manager Charles Cepeda after the 2008 Corporate Challenge held Sunday at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Team PTC whoop it up after winning the tie breaker during the 2008 Corporate Challenge sponsored by the Saipan Chamber of Commerce, held Sunday at the Carolinian Utt in Garapan. Team PTC emerged as the champion of this year's Corporate Challenge.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

GOP ELECTION
CNMI Republican Party national committee chairwoman Mary Lou Ada and Northern Marianas College volunteers help count the votes during the election of delegates for the Republican National Convention at the Garapan Central Park Saturday night.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

AMENDED INVITATION FOR BIDS
WATER TASK FORCE
IFB08-GOV-042

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the CNMI Water Task Force, are soliciting sealed bids for the CAPITOL HILL 1.0 MILLION GALLON RESERVOIR REHABILITATION PROJECT in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A bid guarantee of 15 percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security may be in certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company licensed to do business in theCNMI.

The Contractor will be required to submit payment and performance bonds from a U.S. Treasury listed company. The Contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal laws including the Davis Bacon Act.

The project consists, in general, but is not limited to:

1. General cleaning of the interior of the tank, including removal of all accumulated sediments on the floor of the tank. Sediments to be disposed of at an acceptable location such as the Marpi Sanitary Landfill.
2. General cleaning of the tank exterior, including the removal of all plant growth on the roof, water blasting of the tank exterior and removal of all debris.
3. Mobilization for the interior and exterior painting including the demolition and removal of existing appurtenances and accessories, and the installation of new accessories as specified in Section 10200, including interior and exterior ladders, drying of the interior of the tank, patching cracks and crevices, and sand blasting where required for a smooth surface. The tank floor may require patching or a topping of concrete.
4. Painting the interior and exterior surfaces. The specifications Section 09810 for the exterior coating and Section 09800 for the interior coating storage pond, specify a particular painting product and paint system, but the specifications allow the contractor to bid an "or equal", paint system. The paint system bid must be an integrated system whereby the manufacturer certifies and warranties the product for a minimum of five years. The painting system shall be compatible with the surface preparation products and be acceptable by the US EPA for use in a potable water reservoir.
5. Periodic inspections, verification of paint thicknesses and leak testing as well as the final clean-up shall be considered a part of the total contract performance. All records shall be turned over to the Project Engineer upon completion and acceptance of the work.

A non-refundable payment of $150 is required for each set of Plans, Specifications, and Proposal Forms, available on or after **February 20, 2008** at the Water Task Force Office, Capitol Hill, Saipan. A mandatory pre-bid conference for this project is scheduled at 10:00 a.m., on **February 25, 2008**, at the WTF Conference Room, Saipan. A project site visit is included as a part of the pre-bid meeting.

All inquiries shall be in writing and address to Pedro Sasamoto, Program Manager, Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950 or fax to (670) 664-2279, no later than. **February 25, 2008**.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001, except Article 7, "Local Business Preference", amended by Public Laws 15-95 and Public Law 15-118, is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal lawgranting the funds for this project.

Sealed bids shall be identified on outside of the envelope by Invitation for Bids No. IFB08-GOV-042. An original and four copies of the bid must be submitted to the Procurement and Supply Office, Lower Base, Saipan before 3:00 pm, on, **March 3, 2008**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for the receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 3:00 pm local time, M**arch 3, 2008**, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via email to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders outside the CNMI, an original and four copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service, the official government postal service of a foreign country, or a commercial courier, no later than **March 3, 2008**, and must be received no later than **March 12, 2008**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 3:00 pm, local time March 13, 2008. However, if no Notices of Intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 3:00 pm, local time on March 4, 2008.

This project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provided to the Commonwealth. This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires recipients of HUD funds and contractors to help insure that the economic opportunities generated by these HUD funds are provided to local low-income residents and the businesses that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible".

All bidders are hereby notified that the CNMI Government will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this solicitation, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

/s/ Timothy P. Villagomez
Lieutenant Governor/Contracting Officer

/s/ Herman S. Sablan
Director, Procurement and Supply

Business

Gas jumps 2 cents at pump, oil ends up

NEW YORK (AP)—Gas prices at the pump added more than 2 cents over the weekend, topping a more than eight-month high reached Friday. Meanwhile, oil prices ended higher after climbing close to $100 a barrel earlier in the session.

Retail gas prices rose 2.2 cents to a national average of $3.137 a gallon from $3.115 Friday, the highest since June 8, according to AAA and the Oil Price Information Service. Gasoline futures also rose less than a penny to settle at $2.5419 a gallon.

Many analysts believe gas prices could climb to record highs between $3.75 and $4 a gallon this spring. The Energy Department's latest forecast calls for gas prices to peak near $3.40 a gallon this spring.

But most say the run-up is only in response to oil's recent spike to a new record above $101 a barrel.

"We've just about caught up with the wholesale surge. There's always lag between wholesale and retail," said Tom Kloza, publisher and chief oil analyst at the Oil Price Information Service in Wall, N.J. "This is a little bit of a false start to a rally that has more to do with oil and not as much with gasoline."

Other analysts also point to inventory levels at a 14-year high that won't support these prices for long.

"We have record high prices, but we don't have record tight inventories," said Tim Evans, an energy analyst at Citigroup Global Markets. "The gasoline market is not physically in bull market territory. Whether traders acknowledge this or not, these are bear market conditions."

Evans pointed out that gas supplies have risen for 15 straight weeks.

"To some extent this is what happens in winter because seasonally demand tends to be weak. But demand has been weaker than a year ago, which has allowed inventories to accumulate at a faster rate," he said.

AP

A Visa card holder holds up his card next to a credit card reader at Best Buy in Mountain View, Calif., Monday, Feb. 25, 2008.

Visa IPO could be largest in US history

NEW YORK (AP)—Stocks are shaky, credit is tight, the economy may be tipping into a recession. Not the best of times to be going to the markets for what could be the largest initial public offering in U.S. history.

That's the gamble Visa is taking as it gave details Monday about an IPO that could raise up to nearly $19 billion: If it works, it could be an encouraging sign to the stock markets and may even help loosen the credit knot.

While Visa's IPO will have little direct effect on its cardholders, the banks that issue Visa cards are expected to see a total windfall of more than $10 billion—which might keep them from pulling back credit lines further and pushing rates higher.

"That's a good thing for the banks, and a good thing for consumers. It might help ease the credit crisis a bit," said Ben Woolsey, marketing director at the card information Web site CreditCards.com.

Banks have suffered huge losses tied to defaults on subprime housing loans and are gearing up for more as consumer credit deteriorates. JPMorgan Chase & Co.—which has a 23 percent stake in Visa—stands to gain the most. The more cash-strapped Citigroup Inc. and Bank of America Corp. are also Visa stockholders.

Visa said Monday in a Securities and Exchange Commission filing that it will offer 406 million shares at $37 to $42 each, following its rival MasterCard in shifting from being a privately held interest to a publicly traded company. If there is enough demand for Visa stock, underwriters will have the option to buy an extra 40.6 million shares.

GTA offers BlackBerry Curve 8320 in Guam

TAMUNING, Guam—GTA TeleGuam announced Monday the arrival of the BlackBerry Curve 8320 Smartphone with Wi-Fi capabilities.

The BlackBerry Curve 8320 is currently the smallest and lightest full QWERTY keyboard in the BlackBerry line-up of smartphones. It offers Wi-Fi technology, which allows users to connect to available Wi-Fi networks or hotspots and browse the web and also features a camera, media player, expandable memory, voice dialing, trackball navigation, video capabilities and high-performance browser.

Andrew Gayle, vice president and general manager of GTA Mpulse Wireless said, "The BlackBerry Curve 8320 Smartphone gives you Wi-Fi access, which means that you can securely access all your data over Wi-Fi networks and Internet hotspots anywhere around the world. We will continue to enrich the diversity of the GTA TeleGuam line up of BlackBerry products and services. It also fits in with our mission to be 'Always There!' with exciting new products and good support."

"Our customers stay connected with award winning devices and 24/7 GTA customer service to back it up. GTA BlackBerry Curve 8320 Smartphone users are able to stay in touch islandwide and worldwide with our extensive voice and data roaming network," Gayle added.

For more information on the BlackBerry Curve™ 8320 Wi-fi Smartphone, or any of GTA TeleGuam's products and services call GTA TeleGuam's "Always There!" Hotline at 644-4GTA (4482) or visit them online at www.gta.net. ***(GTA)***

Five former insurance execs found guilty

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—Five former insurance company executives were found guilty Monday of a scheme to manipulate the financial statements of the world's largest insurance company, American International Group Inc.

The defendants, including four former executives including a onetime CEO of General Re Corp., and a former executive of AIG, sat stone-faced as they were convicted of conspiracy, securities fraud, mail fraud and making false statements to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Prosecutors said they participated in a scheme in which AIG paid Gen Re as part of a secret side agreement to take out reinsurance policies with AIG in 2000 and 2001, propping up its stock price and inflating reserves by $500 million.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

S&P affirms MBIA, Ambac

NEW YORK (AP)—Standard and Poor's affirmed its rating on the financial strength of MBIA and Ambac, two troubled bond insurers fighting to keep their top-notch ratings. The move alleviates some concerns that the insurers' failure would make it even more difficult for businesses, municipalities and consumers to borrow money. The bond insurance industry, which insures $2.3 trillion in debt, has suffered from the perception that is not as sturdy as it once was. Standard & Poor's Ratings Services affirmed its "AAA" rating on Ambac and MBIA, saying it appears the bond insurers will raise enough cash to pay the claims they will likely face.

Stocks rise as Ambac rating affirmed

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street bolted higher Monday after Standard & Poor's affirmed its ratings for Ambac Financial Group Inc. and MBIA Inc., raising hopes that troubled bond insurers will emerge from the credit market crisis on solid footing. The Dow Jones industrials rallied nearly 190 points. The Dow rose 189.20, or 1.53 percent, to 12,570.22. Broader stock indexes also closed with a solid advance. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 18.69, or 1.38 percent, to 1,371.80; and the Nasdaq composite index added 24.13, or 1.05 percent, to 2,327.48.

Existing home sales decline

WASHINGTON (AP)—Sales of existing homes fell for the sixth straight month in January, dropping to the slowest sales pace on record. Median home prices were also down and many analysts predicted further price declines in the months ahead given high levels of unsold homes. The National Association of Realtors said Monday that sales of single-family homes and condominiums dropped by 0.4 percent last month to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.89 million units. That was the slowest sales pace, going back to 1999, and was seen as evidence that the steepest slump in housing in a quarter-century has yet to hit bottom. The median price of a home sold in January slid to $201,100, a drop of 4.6 percent from a year ago.

Court rules against tobacco companies

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court on Monday rejected a tobacco industry request to intervene in a lawsuit by over a thousand West Virginia smokers. The justices declined to examine a trial procedure in which a jury first determines whether smokers as a group are entitled to punitive damages before establishing whether any single smoker is entitled to compensation. Later, a new jury addresses issues unique to each alleged smoking victim who sued. West Virginia courts are allowing the approach, which has been used in other types of lawsuits, including claims for asbestos exposure. The second phases of such trials rarely occur, because the two sides usually settle once they know the value of the case.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA 5,730.80 Up 31.00 (+0.54%)	HONG KONG 23,578.59 Up 309.45 (+1.33%)
JAKARTA 2,755.58 Up 3.72 (+0.14%)	TOKYO 13,986.44 Up 71.87 (+0.52%)
K. LUMPUR 1,370.79 Up 1.31 (+0.10%)	MANILA 3,079.54 Down 0.70 (-0.02%)
SINGAPORE 3,074.34 Up 9.39 (+0.31%)	SEOUL 1,711.48 Up 2.35 (+0.14%)
BANGKOK 599.94 Up 0.71 (+0.12%)	

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW 12,570.22 +189.20

NASDAQ 2,327.48 +24.13

S&P 1,371.80 +18.69

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.0769
British Pound	0.5086
Canadian Dollar	0.9966
Chinese Renmbi	7.1595
Euro	0.6743
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7972
Indian Rupee	39.925
Indonesian Rupiah	9087
Japanese Yen	107.875
Malaysian Ringgit	3.2135
New Zealand Dollar	1.2337
Philippine Peso	40.5
Singapore Dollar	1.405
South Korean Won	946.7
Swiss Franc	1.0898
Taiwan Dollar	31.208
Thailand Baht	32.255

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

Bush predicts GOP will hold White House

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush predicted Monday that voters will replace him with a Republican president who will "keep up the fight" in Iraq. "I'm confident we'll hold the White House in 2008," Bush told donors at the Republican Governors Association annual dinner, which raised a record $10.6 million for GOP gubernatorial candidates. "And I don't want the next Republican president to be lonely," Bush said. "And that is why we got to take the House, retake the Senate, and make sure our states are governed by Republican governors." The pep talk came in the midst of a presidential campaign that largely has overshadowed Bush's final year in office. Bush has promised to be an active fundraiser, and he had no trouble slipping into enthusiastic campaign mode Monday evening.

Convicted ex-cop pleads for his life

CANTON, Ohio (AP)—A former police officer sobbed and apologized for killing his pregnant lover and their unborn child as he appealed Monday to the jury that convicted him to spare his life. "I accept responsibility," Bobby Cutts Jr., 30, said from the witness stand. Cutts was convicted Feb. 15 of aggravated murder in the death of the nearly full-term fetus and of murder in the death of Jessie Davis, 26. He could receive death, life in prison without parole or life with parole after 20, 25 or 30 years. Reading from handwritten notes, Cutts said he could not express in words how he felt knowing that he had killed Davis, 26, and the unborn girl, who was to be named Chloe.

McCain says he could lose over war issue

AMERICA VOTES

ROCKY RIVER, Ohio (AP)—John McCain said Monday that to win the White House he must convince a war-weary country that U.S. policy in Iraq is succeeding. If he can't, "then I lose. I lose," the Republican said.

He quickly backed off that remark.

"Let me not put it that stark," the likely GOP nominee told reporters on his campaign bus. "Let me just put it this way: Americans will judge my candidacy first and foremost on how they believe I can lead the country both from our economy and for national security. Obviously, Iraq will play a role in their judgment of my ability to handle national security."

McCain

"If I may, I'd like to retract 'I'll lose.' But I don't think there's any doubt that how they judge Iraq will have a direct relation to their judgment of me, my support of the surge," McCain added. "Clearly, I am tied to it to a large degree."

The five-year-old Iraq conflict already is emerging as a fault line in the general election, with the Arizona senator calling for the U.S. military to continue its mission while his Democratic opponents urge speedy withdrawal.

While most Republicans still back the war, many independents and Democrats don't. That presents a significant challenge for McCain and an opportunity for either Barack Obama or Hillary Rodham Clinton.

McCain acknowledged the war will be "a significant factor in how the American people judge my candidacy."

The lead Republican on the Senate Armed Services Committee, McCain has consistently backed the war although he's long criticized the way it was waged after the Saddam Hussein's fall. He was an original proponent of President Bush's troop-increase strategy, having called for more forces on the ground for several years. Last spring, McCain went all in on the war by embracing it as Bush took heat for boosting troop levels to quell violence.

Clinton: Obama wavers on foreign policy issues

WASHINGTON (AP)—Hillary Rodham Clinton characterized rival Barack Obama on Monday as rash and inconsistent on foreign policy issues. Shifting to foreign policy after two days of hammering the Illinois senator over their differences on health care, Clinton paired two of Obama's campaign statements to support her conclusion.

"He wavers from seeming to believe that mediation and meetings without preconditions can solve some of the world's most intractable problems to advocating rash, unilateral military action without the cooperation of our allies in the most sensitive part of the world," Clinton said in a speech at The George Washington University.

Obama photo in turban, robe causes Internet stir

WASHINGTON (AP)—A photograph circulating on the Internet of Democratic Sen. Barack Obama dressed in traditional local garments during a visit to Kenya in 2006 is causing a dustup in the presidential campaign over what constitutes a smear.

Obama

The Associated Press photograph portrays Obama wearing a white turban and a wraparound white robe presented to him by elders in Wajir, in northeastern Kenya. Obama's estranged late father was Kenyan and Obama visited the country in 2006, attracting thousands of well-wishers.

The gossip and news Web site The Drudge Report posted the photograph Monday and said it was being circulated by "Clinton staffers" and quoted an e-mail from an unidentified campaign aide. Drudge did not include proof of the e-mail in the report.

AP

FISHING IN THE FOG

James Hard, 21, of Bryan cuts a solitary figure while fishing during dense fog at sunrise on Lake Bryan in Brazos County, Texas.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, : CIVIL ACTION NO. 06-459

Plaintiff,

-v-

EUGENE M. BABAUTA and ANGELA L. BABUTA,

Defendants.

FIRST AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on December 5, 2007, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 045 A 064, situated in As Matuis, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 949 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 045 A 003 dated July 12, 1989, Commonwealth Recorders File No. 90-1671, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, March 28, 2008, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 22nd day of February, 2008:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, : CIVIL ACTION NO. 06-502

Plaintiff,

-v-

JOSEPH S. TAITANO and EMELYN N. TAITANO,

Defendants.

FIRST AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on October 25, 2007, I will sell, at public auction, to t he highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 011 G 514, situated in Kagman III, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 767 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 011 G 11 dated December 1, 1993, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 93-4178, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, March 28, 2008, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 22nd day of February, 2008:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, : CIVIL ACTION NO. 06-504

Plaintiff,

-v-

PRISCILLA T. CASTRO,

Defendant.

FIRST AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on August 2, 2007, I will sell, at public auction, to t he highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Lot No. 011 G 702, situated in Kagman III, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 800 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 011 G 14 dated December 1, 1993, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 93-4182, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, March 28, 2008, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 22nd day of February, 2008:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, : CIVIL ACTION NO. 06-506

Plaintiff,

-v-

NIEVES OLOPAI ROMOLOR,

Defendant.

FIRST AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on June 27, 2007, I will sell, at public auction, to t he highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendant in and to the following property: Lot 011 G 492, situated in Kagman III, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 841 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 011 G 01 dated December 1, 1993, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 93-4178, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, March 28, 2008, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 22nd day of February, 2008:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, : CIVIL ACTION NO. 06-509 D

Plaintiff,

-v-

HONORA A. KOSHIRO and SALVADOR S. KOSHIRO,

Defendants.

FIRST AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on September 28, 2007, I will sell, at public auction, to t he highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 011 G 197, situated in Kagman III, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 795 square meters, more or less, as shown on the Division of Lands and Surveys Official Cadastral Plat No. 011 G 04 dated December 1, 1993, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 93-4412, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, March 28, 2008, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 22nd day of February, 2008:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION, : CIVIL ACTION NO. 07-0075

Plaintiff,

-v-

JOSE F. I. KAPILEO and the ESTATE OF LONA P. PHILLIP, Deceased,

Defendants.

FIRST AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to an Order issued by the Court in this matter on December 13, 2007, I will sell, at public auction, to t he highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants in and to the following property: Lot No. 005 I 129, situated in Koblerville, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 1,104 square meters, more or less, as shown on Cadastral Plat No. 005 I 0, the original of which was registered with the Land Registry as Document Bo. 16702 on March 11, 1983, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, March 28, 2008, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at The Law Offices of Michael A. White, LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 22nd day of February, 2008:

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE, Auctioneer

Asia

AP

Thousands of protesters march towards the Presidential Palace to call for the ouster of Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo on the 22nd anniversary of the "People Power" revolution Monday Feb. 25, 2008 in Manila, Philippines.

RP Catholic bishops discuss response to Arroyo scandal

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Influential Roman Catholic bishops who threw support behind a key witness in a high-level corruption scandal held an emergency meeting Tuesday to discuss their response to the crisis threatening the Philippine president.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, which played a key role in nonviolent revolts that ousted two leaders in the last two decades, has called on the public to find out the truth about bribery allegations that implicated President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's husband.

So far, the bishops have not joined widespread calls for Arroyo to step down—a move crucial to her ability to weather the political crisis.

They have hailed a star witness who exposed the alleged large-scale bribery and called for a "communal action" to fight corruption, but its ambiguity left many people disappointed.

Archbishop Oscar Cruz said the bishops, who normally meet in January and July each year, decided to try to forge a common stand on the bribery scandal, including calls for Arroyo's removal from office.

"We have different voices and people notice, so hopefully in this meeting, we can come up with a common stand," Cruz told ABS-CBN television.

Bishop Deogracias Yniquez, who speaks for the group, said it was not clear whether the result of the one-day discussions will be immediately made public.

Thousands of left-wing and church-backed activists took to the streets Monday to demand Arroyo's resignation on the anniversary of the 1986 "people power" revolt that toppled late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Military and police generals, along with 4,000 police officers, staged their own "unity walk" to show loyalty to Arroyo amid coup rumors. Pro-Arroyo lawmakers also led a rally by more than 3,000 people.

Protesters have been galvanized by anti-corruption hearings at the Senate that exposed an anomalous telecommunications contract that allegedly involved kickbacks to senior officials and the president's husband.

Suicide bomber kills Pakistan general

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—A suicide bomber killed the Pakistan army's surgeon general Monday in the highest-level assassination since President Pervez Musharraf joined the U.S. war against terror.

The strike was a reminder of the extremist threat just as Musharraf resists pressure to quit from opponents who swept last week's parliamentary election.

A presidential spokesman on Monday dismissed suggestions from three U.S. senators that the embattled Pakistani leader might beat a "graceful" retreat from power.

Musharraf was elected to a new five-year presidential term last year by Pakistani lawmakers, "not by any senator from the United States," spokesman Rashid Qureshi told Dawn News television. "So I don't think he needs to respond to anything that is said by these people."

The lone suicide bomber targeted Lt. Gen. Mushtaq Baig's black Toyota sedan when it stopped for a red signal on a busy road in Rawalpindi, a city just south of the capital, officials and witnesses said.

Baig, the army's top medical officer, died along with his driver and guard, the army said. Five civilians were also killed, it said.

US tries violin diplomacy in North Korea

PYONGYANG, North Korea (AP)—Swirling dancers and musicians beating traditional drums welcomed the New York Philharmonic to North Korea Monday for a historic cultural exchange between countries that have been technically at war for more than a half-century.

In a burst of musical diplomacy notably devoid of propaganda glorifying leader Kim Jong Il or attacks on U.S. policy, North Korean dancers balanced water jars on their heads or twirled pink and green fans to entertain the celebrated American orchestra—which gave them a standing ovation.

The Philharmonic is the first major American cultural group to visit the isolated communist nation and the largest-ever delegation from the U.S. to visit its longtime foe.

World

Wheelchair bomber escapes detection

BAGHDAD (AP)—A man in a wheelchair laden with explosives persuaded security guards Monday to push him into an Iraqi operations center, where he blew himself up in an attack that killed the center's deputy commander.

The infiltration, along with a U.S. report that insurgents used an adolescent to carry out a suicide attack against a mosque last week, was the latest indication that al-Qaida in Iraq is expanding its tactics to avoid detection before a bombing.

The Iraqi military indefinitely banned all motorcycles, bicycles and hand-pushed and horse-drawn carts from Baghdad's streets on Sunday, two days after a bomb hidden under a horse-drawn cart exploded downtown, killing three civilians.

That attack came exactly one month after a suicide bomber pushing an electric heater atop a cart packed with hidden explosives attacked a high school in Baqouba. And in an attack at a tribal gathering near Fallujah on Jan. 20, the bomber was a 15-year-old boy carrying a box of candy.

Women also have been used more frequently as bombers in recent months, including two with a history of psychiatric treatment who killed about 100 people at pet markets in Baghdad on Feb. 1.

It remains unclear if al-Qaida has begun using teenagers and women because it has been unable to recruit new insurgents or because they are more difficult to detect.

On Monday, the United States condemned al-Qaida in Iraq for carrying out a massacre against Shiite religious pilgrims and trying to wrench the country back to the brink of civil war.

The attacks come even as violence has plunged to its lowest level since the months following the 2003 invasion.

U.S. Embassy spokesman Philip Reeker said that while al-Qaida in Iraq has been "severely damaged," it remains a "dangerous threat."

'Doomsday' vault opens to protect seeds

LONGYEARBYEN, Norway (AP)—It's been dubbed a Noah's Ark for plant life and built to withstand an earthquake or a nuclear attack.

Dug deep into the permafrost of a remote Arctic mountain, the "doomsday" vault is designed by Norway to protect the world's seeds from global catastrophe.

The Svalbard Global Seed Vault, a backup to the world's 1,400 other seed banks, was to be officially inaugurated in a ceremony Tuesday on the northern rim of civilization attended by about 150 guests from 33 countries.

The frozen vault has the capacity to store 4.5 million seed samples from around the globe, shielding them from climate change, war, natural disasters and other threats.

"There are not many countries in the world that could have pulled this off," said Cary Fowler, executive director of the Global Crop Diversity Trust, a partner in the project.

Norway's government owns the vault in Svalbard, a frigid archipelago 620 miles from the North Pole. The Nordic country paid $9.1 million for construction, which took less than a year. Other countries can deposit seeds for free and reserve the right to withdraw them upon need.

The operation is financed by the Global Crop Diversity Trust, which was founded by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization and Biodiversity International, a Rome-based research group.

AP

Magnus Bredeli-Pveiten, project manager for the Svalbard Global Seed Vault Monday Feb. 25, 2008 is seen at the vault in Longyearbyen, Norway.

Cyclone toll in Madagascar rises to 44

ANTANANARIVO, Madagascar (AP)—The death toll has risen to 44 and the number of homeless is up to 145,000 more than a week after a cyclone tore through this island in the Indian Ocean, Madagascar's government said Monday.

Areas on the eastern side of the island remained cut off by flood waters. Seven major roads were impassable and bridges have been destroyed, hampering attempts to deliver relief, according to the Ministry of Transport.

Cyclone Ivan lashed Madagascar on Feb. 17 with torrential rain and winds of up to 140 miles per hour.

The hardest-hit region is Fenerive Este, where one out of nearly every three residents lost their homes and 70 percent of buildings have been destroyed. Emergency medical supplies have been exhausted on island of Sainte Marie, a popular tourist resort that is home to 19,000, officials said.

Madagascar now faces food shortages after 37,000 acres of rice fields were flooded in the region of Alaotra Mangoro, which provides nearly a third of the island's staple food.

Turkish military kills 41 Kurdish rebels

CUKURCA, Turkey (AP)—Turkey's military said Monday it had killed 41 more separatist Kurdish rebels in clashes in northern Iraq, raising the reported guerrilla death toll in a cross-border operation to 153.

A statement posted on the military's Web site also said two more soldiers were killed in fighting, but gave no details. The deaths would drive the total Turkish military fatalities since the start of the incursion Thursday to 17. It said the military had hit some 30 targets of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, in the last 24 hours.

Rebels disputed the claim of the number of fighters killed and warned that Turkey had entered a conflict that it could not win.

Turkey said its troops fired dozens of salvos of artillery shells at suspected rebel hideouts Monday and clashed with the rebels in four parts of northern Iraq. It did not specify the locations. It said troops were destroying rebel shelters, logistic centers and ammunition. Retreating rebels were setting booby traps under the corpses of dead comrades or planting mines on escape routes, the military said.

Campus Life

School of pot: New meaning to 'higher' education

California trade school teaches people how to grow pot

By LISA LEFF
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

AP
Richard Lee, president of Oaksterdam University, sits in front of the school's gift shop across the street from the university building in Oakland, Calif., Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008.

OAKLAND, California (AP)—You know you are in a different kind of college when a teaching assistant sets five marijuana plants down in the middle of a lab and no one blinks a bloodshot eye.

Welcome to Oaksterdam University, a new trade school where higher education takes on a whole new meaning.

The Oakland school prepares people for jobs in California's thriving medical marijuana industry. For $200 (€135) and the cost of two required textbooks, students learn how to cultivate and cook with cannabis, study which strains of pot are best for certain ailments, and are instructed in the legalities of a business that is against the law in the eyes of the federal government.

"My basic idea is to try to professionalize the industry and have it taken seriously as a real industry, just like beer and distilling hard alcohol," said Richard Lee, 45, an activist and pot-dispensary owner who founded the school in a downtown storefront last fall.

So far, 60 students have completed the two-day weekend course, which is sold out through May. At the end of the class, students are given a take-home test, with the top scorer earning the title of class valedictorian.

Before getting to Horticulture 101, the hands-on highlight of Oaksterdam U, the 20 budding botanists, entrepreneurs and political activists at a recent weekend session sat politely through two law lectures and a visiting professor's history talk.

In the lab, Lee measured plant food into a plastic garbage can and explained how, with common sense, upgraded electrical outlets, a fan and an air filter, students can grow pot at home for fun, health, public service—or profit.

Lee explained to his students how to prune and harvest plants, handing the clipping shears to a woman who was not sure how close to the stalk to cut without damaging it. He offered his thoughts on which commercial nutrient preparations are best, as well as the advantages of hydroponics, or soil-free gardening.

During a discussion of neighbor relations, he warned against setting boobytraps to keep curious kids out of outdoor gardens.

Students gave various reasons for enrolling. Some said they were simply curious. Others said they wanted tips for growing their own weed, although judging from the questions, a few were ready for the graduate seminar Lee recently added to the curriculum.

Jeff Sanders, 52, said he has been buying medical marijuana since 2003, but wants to open a dispensary in the San Joaquin Valley in central California because he does not like having to drive up to San Francisco and paying the markup.

"I see it as a good thing. You are giving back to the community," Sanders said.

AP
A binder showcasing high-grade marijuana buds and other cannabis are displayed at the Coffeeshop Blue Sky dispensary, Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008, in Oakland, Calif.

Patrick O'Shaughnessy, 37, said he started smoking pot regularly for the first time about a year ago to treat his chronic migraines, depression and anxiety. After attending class, he said felt more confident about growing his own, which he wants to do because the dispensary he frequents often sells out of his favorite strain.

Oaksterdam U draws its name from the jokey nickname for a section of Oakland where some of California's earliest medical marijuana dispensaries took root. The nickname in turn was inspired by the city of Amsterdam, in Holland, where pot use is tolerated.

At one point, the Oaksterdam neighborhood had at least 15 clubs and coffee shops selling pot, a number that dwindled to four when the city started issuing permits and collecting taxes from them a few years ago.

California was the first of a dozen U.S. states that have legalized marijuana use for patients with a doctor's recommendation despite the federal prohibition. Despite periodic raids by federal drug agents and the threat of prosecution, clubs and cooperatives where customers can buy the drug of their choice have proliferated; California has 300 to 400, according to advocacy groups.

Entry-level workers are paid a little more than minimum wage, while "bud tenders," can make over $50,000 (€33,745) a year, and owners and top managers more than $100,000 (€67,490), Lee said. But there is also a certain amount of risk—and not just financial, but legal.

Michael Chapman, an assistant agent in charge with the federal Drug Enforcement Agency's San Francisco office, said authorities are aware of Oaksterdam U and do not see any reason to shut it down. Talking about marijuana is not illegal, and while a small amount of pot is kept on the premises, the DEA tries "to concentrate our case work on the most significant violators," he said.

Still, Chapman said he does not like Lee's effort to wrap cannabis education in a cap and gown.

"I think they are sending the wrong message out to the community and it's something that could only facilitate criminal behavior," he said.

Separating the boys from the girls

By DORIE TURNER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

GREENSBORO, Georgia (AP)—Nearly four decades after a rural Georgia county stopped segregating its schools by race, it wants to divide students again—this time by sex.

Greene County is set to become the first school district in the United States to go entirely single-sex, with boys and girls in separate classrooms—a move born of desperation over years of poor test scores, soaring dropout rates and high numbers of teenage pregnancies.

"At the rate we're moving, we're never going to catch up," Superintendent Shawn McCollough told parents in an impassioned speech last week. "If we're going to take some steps, let's take some big steps."

This pine-shrouded county of about 14,400 people has in recent years become a magnet for retirees moving into luxury developments along the shore of Lake Oconee. But the vast majority of longtime residents—and most of the 2,000 students in the county's schools—are black and working class.

McCollough pointed to research showing that boys and girls learn differently, and said separating them will allow teachers to tailor their lessons. Also, boys will not misbehave as much because they will no longer be trying to impress the girls, and the girls will be more likely to speak up in class because they will not be afraid to look smart in front of the boys, he said.

The school board's move to radically overhaul the system next fall has angered parents, students and teachers, who say they were not consulted. And one of the nation's foremost proponents of single-sex education warned that the board has gone too far.

"I am outraged," said Tammi Freeman, who has two children at the high school. "I am disgusted. It's making our county look like our kids are trouble when they're not."

Leonard Sax, head of the National Association for Single Sex Public Education, said that while single-sex schools and classrooms are on the increase, he knows of no other community that has converted its entire school system. He called the move illegal.

U.S. law allows single-sex classrooms or schools, but parents must also have the option of publicly funded coeducation for their children, Sax said.

"This is the worst kind of publicity for our movement," he said. "It misses the whole point. Our movement is about choice. One size does not fit all. Even a small school district needs to provide choice."

U.S. Education Department spokeswoman Samara Yudof said officials "do not have sufficient facts to determine if the district would be in compliance" with federal law.

Districts across the U.S. have been switching to single-sex education since federal officials issued rules to ease the process in 2006. Nationally, at least 366 public schools are either entirely single-sex or have single-sex classrooms, Sax said.

Greene County is about 70 percent black. Many people in the county made their living at hosiery, clothing and fabric mills until the industry disappeared at the end of the 20th century and gave way to a service economy in which the big employers are the Reynolds Plantation luxury golf resort community and the Ritz-Carlton lodge.

McCollough said he hopes single-sex classrooms raise test scores and graduation rates in a district where more than three-quarters of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunches because of their low incomes.

Research shows that when boys and girls are separated, each group performs better in school and is more likely to go to college, said Julie Ancis, a professor in the school of education at Georgia State University.

But she said single-sex schools tend to be private institutions with updated technology and ample resources, not poor school systems like Greene County's.

ON THE NET

Greene County Board of Education:
http://http://www.greene.k12.ga.us/system/index.htm
National Association for Single Sex Education:
http://www.singlesexschools.org

CAMPUS BULLETIN

MHS Class of '88 meeting

The Marianas High School Class of 1988 will be meeting again on Thursday, March 6, 2008, at 7pm at the residence of Melvin and Eleanor Cepeda in As Lito behind Saipan International School. All classmates are encouraged to attend this important meeting. For more information, contact Lillian Lizama Tudela at 287-3742 or Dennis Villagomez at 287-4689. ***(PR)***

MHS Class of '83 meeting

The MHS Class of 1983's 25th year reunion is fast approaching and event tickets are selling like hotcakes. Come and join us at our next meeting on Friday, Feb. 29, 2008, at 6pm, at the Kilili Beach pavilion. See your committee memners for great deals on event tickets.

Contact any of the Steering Committee members for details: Tonnei Camacho, 483-9665; Viola Kaipat, 483-0214; Ed Camacho, 483-5262; Jane Tudela, 234-9571; Frances Mildred Cruz, 483-0995; Ester Teregeyo, 285-6284; Ben Sablan, 287-1480; or Diego Songsong, 287-4300. ***(PR)***

Life & Style

Oscar honor overdue for Coen brothers

By JAKE COYLE
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

AP

Producers Ethan Coen, left, Scott Rudin and Joel Coen pose with their Oscars after the film "No Country for Old Men" won best motion picture of the year at the 80th Academy Awards Sunday, Feb. 24, 2008, in Los Angeles.

The enigmatic Coen brothers, always content to amuse themselves in their own absurd realms, were feted as expected Sunday night at the Oscars, winning best picture for "No Country for Old Men," best director(s) and best adapted screenplay.

"We're very thankful to all of you out there for continuing to let us play in our corner of the sandbox," Joel Coen said, while accepting the award for best director.

And what a bizarre sandbox it is.

After years of genre mash-ups, cult classics and bloody capers, the Coens burst through to Oscar glory with their steely, violent adaptation of Cormac McCarthy's novel. A year after the academy finally honored Martin Scorsese for directing, the Coens' wins had the feel of a similar reckoning, albeit expedited in far speedier fashion.

Though Joel and Ethan Coen's many die-hard fans might say their win was nevertheless belated—it coming 24 years after their first film—their Texas crime film has generally been viewed as a culmination of craft for the brothers.

They are the first siblings to win the directing honor and just the second pair to share Hollywood's top filmmaking honor, following Robert Wise and Jerome Robbins for 1961's "West Side Story."

The Coens, in a rare occasion of working from material not their own, also won for best adapted screenplay for their script. Accepting the award, Joel Coen alluded to the brothers' 2000 film, "O Brother, Where Art Thou," which was (very) loosely based on "The Odyssey."

"Whatever success we've had in this area has been entirely attributable to how selective we are," said Coen, with McCarthy calmly looking on from the audience. "We've only adapted Homer and Cormac McCarthy."

The Coens won for best original screenplay for "Fargo" in 1997, though they lost to Anthony Minghella ("The English Patient") for best director. Many view "Fargo" as the Coen's finest film, which, like "No Country for Old Men," portrayed violent crime across a desolate landscape.

To cultists, the directors' most essential movie is 1998's "The Big Lebowski," for which fans still yearly congregate to celebrate. Fans could be counted on to be toasting white Russians all over town.

After a series of box office and critical duds like the remake "The Ladykillers" and "Intolerable Cruelty," "No Country" has emerged as the Coens' biggest financial success, surpassing $60 million in theaters.

Accepting the awards, Ethan Coen, 49, was typically mum, choosing only to say, "Thank you." The 53-year-old Joel, however, recalled their childhood origins as filmmakers.

"Ethan and I have been making stories with movie cameras since we were kids," said Coen, recalling a Super 8 film they made titled "Henry Kissinger: Man on the Go." "Honestly, what we do now doesn't feel that much different from what we were doing then."

"No Country" was the favorite heading into Oscar night, and the awards went—unlike their characters' exploits—largely according to plan, with the film capturing best picture honors. And Javier Bardem, who plays Anton Chigurh, an implacable killer with the hair of Prince Valiant, won supporting actor.

"Thank you to the Coens for being crazy enough to think that I could do that, and put one of the most horrible haircuts in history over my head," said Bardem.

Bardem's curious 'do was one of the Coens' few characteristically idiosyncratic touches. For "No Country," they primarily played it straight, portraying three twisting plots with foreboding quiet and frenzied explosions of sound.

One tantalizing opportunity was missed Sunday night when the Coens lost for best editing. They were nominated under their pseudonym Roderick Jaynes (which they use for editing credits), and the academy had said it would read that name should "Jaynes" win. Whether the Coens would have stood up to accept was unknown; instead, Christopher Rouse won for "The Bourne Ultimatum."

Asked backstage how Jaynes was taking his loss, Ethan Cohen said: "We know he's elderly and unhappy, so probably not well."

The Coens seem to have realized adaptations might be worth it, after all. It was recently announced that they will reunite with "No Country" producer Scott Rudin to adapt Michael Chabon's "The Yiddish Policeman's Union."

Best Song co-winner gets second chance

AP

Glen Hansard and Marketa Irglova leave the stage after accepting the Oscar for best original song for "Falling Slowly" from the motion picture "Once" during the 80th Academy Awards in Los Angeles, Sunday, Feb. 24, 2008.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—It could've gone down as one of the harshest moments in Oscar history.

The orchestra swelled just as petite Best Original Song co-winner Marketa Irglova stepped up to the microphone to speak following partner Glen Hansard. The pair won for their tune "Falling Slowly" from the indie musical "Once," but only Hansard gave an acceptance before their moment in the spotlight seemed to be over.

"This is amazing. Make art. Make art. Thanks," he said.

Irglova could barely muster a polite "Thank you" before the orchestra, led by conductor Bill Conti, cut her off. After a commercial break, host Jon Stewart brought the 19-year-old Czech musician back on stage for a second chance to give an acceptance speech.

She took full advantage.

"The fact that we're standing here tonight, the fact that we're able to hold this, it's just proof that no matter how far out your dreams are, it's possible," Irglova said during take two. "And, you know, fair play to those who dare to dream, and don't give up. This song was written from the perspective of hope, and hope, at the end of the day, connects us all, no matter how different we are."

Irglova's second-chance speech lasted just over a minute. She said she was just as surprised as everyone else in the audience about the spontaneous and rare reprieve.

"When I went backstage, they said they were going to have me go back out," Irglova said after the incident. "It was great to get that chance, and I'm very grateful to them for doing that."

Oscar producer Gil Cates said the show director was looking down and queued the music when Hansard finished speaking.

"She was accidentally played off. No one wanted to play her off. ... I asked her to come back. I asked Jon to please bring her back. It was a very emotional moment."

Cotillard earns Oscar in Piaf bio 'Rose'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Marion Cotillard did more than become a new Academy Awards darling on Sunday. She also denied a long-established one.

With a phenomenal performance as singer Edith Piaf in "La Vie En Rose," Cotillard pulled an upset win for best actress over Julie Christie, who had been the favorite to claim a second Oscar 42 years after she won for "Darling."

"Wow. Well, I'm speechless now," a tearful Cotillard said, her French-accented voice quivering as she accepted the award. "It is true ... angels in this city. Thank you so, so much."

Backstage, her delight was even less restrained.

"It feels so good. I'm totally overwhelmed with joy and sparkles and fireworks and everything which goes like bom-bom-bom," Cotillard said.

Cotillard

The French actress has appeared in such Hollywood films as "Big Fish" and "A Good Year," but generally was unknown to U.S. audiences until "La Vie En Rose."

Cotillard, 32, won out over a strong field of actresses from around the globe. Along with Christie, who is British, the nominees were Cate Blanchett of Australia for "Elizabeth: The Golden Age," American Laura Linney for "The Savages," and Canada's Ellen Page for "Juno."

The best-actress category had been considered a two-woman race between Cotillard and Christie, with the latter the front-runner for "Away From Her," in which she gives a heartbreaking performance as a woman succumbing to Alzheimer's.

Born in Paris, Cotillard grew up in a stage family, with both parents actors. She performed in plays starting at age 3 or 4, but acted only occasionally during childhood, settling on a career in drama in her late teens.

Cotillard found steady work in French film and television. Her credits include producer Luc Besson's action comedy "Taxi" and its sequels and Jean-Pierre Jeunet's acclaimed drama "A Very Long Engagement," the latter earning her the supporting-actress prize at the Cesars, France's equivalent of the Oscars.

Two days before her Oscar triumph, Cotillard won the best-actress Cesar for "La Vie En Rose."

With song-and-dance films making a comeback, Cotillard was the latest in a string of performers winning for music-themed pictures, including Jennifer Hudson for "Dreamgirls," Reese Witherspoon for "Walk the Line," Catherine Zeta-Jones for "Chicago" and Jamie Foxx for "Ray."

Like Foxx, Cotillard had to learn the fine art of lip-synching, mimicking Piaf's expressions and body language while mouthing along to tracks prerecorded by French singer Jil Aigrot, who re-created Piaf's distinctive warble.

Playing Piaf from her fiery teens through her fragile 40s, Cotillard offered a remarkable embodiment of the singer, who rose from a guttersnipe belting out tunes in the streets to become an international star in the 1930s, '40s and '50s. Piaf died in 1963 at age 47.

"I really dedicated my life to the movie and to Edith Piaf for a few months," Cotillard said backstage.

"My aim was to understand her. To understand her heart, her soul. And so I went as deep as I could. I tried to do my best to find her inside me. And but it was not so hard, because I really love her."

Elton John is the belle of Oscar parties

LOS ANGELES (AP)—With Vanity Fair sitting out this year's celebrations, the belle of the Oscars parties was a piano playing Elton John.

The 60-year-old singer's 16th annual viewing dinner and after-party benefiting the Elton John AIDS Foundation topped other bashes Sunday, with 750 guests and a bevy of A-list stars who sipped cocktails and feasted on a four-course meal under the Pacific Design Center's red-draped tent.

Vanity Fair's lavish, celebrity-drenched annual affair, typically the top Oscar-night party, was canceled weeks earlier, before the end of the writers strike.

After greeting each table, John pounded out the first of 11 songs, the first time in several years that he has played a full set with an entire band at his own party.

John, who wore an ornate Yohji Yamamoto black suit, silver tie and black-framed eyeglasses, pointed at the crowd and banged on his piano. The crowd howled and clapped when he broke out hits such as "Rocket Man" and "Tiny Dancer."

Patricia Clarkson waved her arms in the air. Calista Flockhart swayed next to beau Harrison Ford. Petra Nemcova jumped on a few chairs and shimmied. Faye Dunaway bopped her head.

Mary J. Blige sang a duet with John, as did Scissor Sisters frontman Jake Shears, clad in a neon yellow-green suit, who jumped on John's piano and did the twist.

AP

Singer Elton John, right, and David Furnish pose on the press line at the Elton John Oscar Party in West Hollywood, Calif. on Sunday, Feb. 24, 2008.

The party's second biggest belle of the evening was Marion Cotillard. Clutching her best actress trophy for "La Vie en Rose," she swept into the bash, rushing past reporters and bear-hugging her family and friends inside the party.

"I am a big fan of hers. I was very moved by her win," a teary-eyed Sharon Stone, wearing a white, tailored tuxedo, told The Associated Press earlier, when the room's dozens of enormous TV screens showed Cotillard tearfully receiving the honor.

Actors gushing over other actors continued throughout the festivities.

Sean Penn, who snagged a best-actor win for 2003's "Mystic River," called this year's winner, Daniel Day-Lewis, "the greatest actor ever recorded on film." Lewis won for his performance in "There Will Be Blood."

Ellen DeGeneres, seated next to Portia de Rossi and Josh Groban, said Oscar host Jon Stewart was "doing a great job."

DeGeneres, who hosted last year's Oscars, joked: "It's better to host. It goes faster."

John and David Furnish shared DeGeneres' table during dinner, along with Blige and her husband. Nemcova, who arrived with Penn, sat with him and Kate Beckinsale, Chris O'Donnell and Larry King. Guests, who also included Billy Joel, Christian Slater and Russell Simmons, ate pear salad, risotto, beef tenderloin, cheese with walnuts and chocolate mousse.

Pink and orange orchids dotted the tables, with palm fronds lending a California dash of glamour on a patio outside. The party, co-sponsored by Chopard and VH1, raised $5.1 million.

However, the first post-Oscars destination for the night's winners and honorees was the Governors Ball, held in the Hollywood & Highland complex just upstairs from the Kodak Theatre.

The room was all red and gold, reflecting Oscars' red carpet and golden statuettes. Glass bubbles hung from the ceiling and red roses dotted each table.

Oscars are a TV ratings dud

NEW YORK (AP)—The Oscars are a ratings dud. Nielsen Media Research says preliminary ratings for the 80th annual Academy Awards telecast are 14 percent lower than the least-watched ceremony ever.

Nielsen said Monday that overnight ratings are also 21 percent lower than last year, when "The Departed" was named best picture.

The least-watched Oscars ceremony ever was in 2003, when there were 33 million viewers.

Nielsen has no estimate yet on how many people watched Sunday night, but based on ratings from the nation's biggest markets, the Oscars will be hard-pressed to avoid an ignominious record.

The show had a 21.9 rating and 33 share.

Oscar shines brightest in small moments

It finally happened: an Oscar night with no major surprises, not even one. Which led to the biggest surprise of all: Learning who's going to win turns out not to be the reason we watch. Not the reason at all.

I don't mean to suggest that I have the combination to those ominous PricewaterhouseCoopers briefcases or that if I would have been in an Oscar pool—which, owing to creeping lassitude, I was not—I would have cleaned up.

It's rather that if you take the three short-film awards, always in a world by themselves, out of the equation, every film that won was either the favorite of veteran Oscar watchers or the No. 2 choice. Absolutely nothing came out of the blue.

That's because, unlike film festival juries, which are one-time-only deals, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, having been around for 80 years, has quite a hefty track record. Given that untold numbers of hours are spent every year minutely scrutinizing the current nominees in light of history and past tendencies, a night like Sunday night was inevitable.

Even the closest thing to a surprise, Tilda Swinton's "Michael Clayton" victory, was predictable. When a film with numerous nominations has only iffy chances of taking one of the top four awards, voters who favor it will make sure to vote for it in the one category it has the best chance of capturing. For "Juno," that was original screenplay, and for "Michael Clayton" that was supporting actress, a grouping so evenly matched that those sentiments made a difference.

Yet, predictable though it was, I thoroughly enjoyed Sunday's event. Even if the winners hadn't been expected, through the grace of the Internet I could have found out who they were within seconds. What I couldn't have experienced except by watching were the irreplaceable human moments, the bright flashes of unpredictable emotion that are increasingly difficult to come by in today's regimented movie-celebrity world.

As the broadcast's generous selection of 80th anniversary clips showed, the live-television aspect of the Oscars always has provided the show with its most unforgettable moments, as winners for decades have just come out and said what was on their minds. And this year was no exception.

So here was 98-year-old honorary Oscar winner Robert Boyle responding to a standing ovation by saying, "That's the good part of getting old. I don't recommend the other." Here was an elated, almost shellshocked Glen Hansard, half of the songwriting team that won for "Once," exulting, "What are we doing here? This is madness." And, most unexpected of all, here was "Juno" screenwriter Diablo Cody, the queen of arrogant-hipster attitude when she won her Spirit Award on Saturday, allowing herself to be open and vulnerable when she thanked her family through unforeseen tears for "loving me exactly the way I am."

Many of the best moments inevitably come courtesy of the great actors who, the Oscars remind us, live with their emotions close to the surface, always at their beck and call.

So we had Daniel Day-Lewis going down on one knee before Helen Mirren and getting "the closest I'll ever get to getting a knighthood." We had Swinton being very much herself with a free-form riff on Oscar and anatomy, and Javier Bardem emotionally saluting his mother in Spanish.

By KENNETH TURAN
© 2008, Los Angeles Times

Best of all there was lead actress winner Marion Cotillard, so emotional that she was in tears when her makeup team won its Oscars, who practically went through the roof at her own victory, ending with a cosmic "Thank you, life, thank you, love, and it is true there is (sic) some angels in this city."

Oscar's habit of cutting quickly to nominated performers after showing a clip of their work provides another insight into the nature of acting. Often—witness Day-Lewis, George Clooney and Amy Ryan—they are seen more or less shaking their heads in wonder at what they had done.

This is not false modesty but rather an acknowledgment of the way actors, when they are working at a high level, more or less turn into other people. Like shamans in civilizations that did without theater, they go into altered states they might only imperfectly remember, and it can shake them up to be reminded of where they've been. Those kinds of privileged glimpses make the Oscars worth watching no matter who wins, loses or even draws.

Oscar 'snub' leaves Whoopi sad, choked up

NEW YORK (AP)—Whoopi Goldberg seemed sad and choked up on "The View" Monday when her fellow co-hosts discussed how she was not included in a montage featuring Oscar hosts during the Academy Awards telecast.

The 52-year-old Goldberg has received two Oscar nominations, winning for her role as Oda Mae Brown in 1990's "Ghost." She hosted the event in 1994, 1996, 1999 and 2002. She did, however, appear as an Oscar winner in a separate montage Sunday night.

Goldberg appeared stumped that the academy would leave her out of the one clip, as well as repeat host Steve Martin.

"Maybe they accidentally lost a clip of you hosting. ... But I think it's wrong," Elisabeth Hasselbeck said. Joy Behar said "being slighted is never fun." Sherri Shepherd wondered if Goldberg had made someone mad.

"Undoubtedly," Goldberg said, smiling. "Undoubtedly I (bleeped) somebody off yet again. You know what, I don't—I don't know."

"I think we should do our own montage of you to make up for it," Hasselbeck said.

"This makes up for it," Goldberg responded, before getting up and kissing each co-host on the cheek. She and Walters embraced.

AP

Comedian Whoopi Goldberg speaks at an USO event in this Nov. 17, 2006 file photo at Caesars Palace Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

‘Rent’ closes, remnants of era remain

AP

Anthony Rapp, left, an original cast member of the Broadway musical Rent and New York Theatre Workshop artistic director James Nicola reminisce about the musical’s origins at the New York Theatre Workshop in the East Village where Rent had its inception twelve years ago in New York, Thursday, Feb. 14, 2008.

NEW YORK (AP)—From the tiny East Village theater where “Rent” was born, you can still catch a glimpse of the funky neighborhood where the hit musical was set—a scruffy courtyard, old brownstones, rusty pipes and fire escapes.

Even when “Rent” opened in 1996, the East Village was gentrifying. Well-heeled newcomers were moving in and rising rents were displacing the bohemians who inspired the show.

On June 1, after a dozen years, Broadway’s seventh-longest running show is to become history, like the once-gritty neighborhood that’s nearly gone as well.

“It was amazing to be living in the world you’re playing on stage,” says Anthony Rapp, an original cast member who lived in the East Village for many years and played the part of Mark, a budding filmmaker shooting a movie about his friends.

“Rent” was an instant sensation when it opened, dubbed an “exhilarating, landmark rock opera” by The New York Times, and when it moved to Broadway, The Associated Press said the show made the transfer with “all its raw energy, raucous musicality and radiant optimism intact.”

A contemporary take on Puccini’s 1897 opera “La Boheme,” it tells the story of a group of friends, among them gays, lesbians and drag queens who live in the East Village around 1990, struggling to make art and find love amid poverty, HIV and drug addiction.

Much of that world has given way to luxury condos, boutiques and galleries on the avenues and side streets south of East 14th Street and north of Houston Street. A one-bedroom rents for as much as $4,000 in the area where “Rent” roommates Mark and Roger lived for free, thanks to an old friend who owned their building—but, as the musical opens, is demanding rent they can’t afford to pay.

In the nearly two decades since the fictional drama took place, restaurant prices have skyrocketed, except in throwbacks like the graffiti-plastered Mars Bar and the Life Cafe, where some of the defiant, joyful revelry of the production takes place.

Today’s sophisticated young hipsters are more likely to flock to the sleek, trendy noodle bar Momofuku, known for its bowls of Japanese ramen topped with Carolina whole-hog barbecue.

According to longtime “Rent” director Michael Greif, the show’s message has transcended the changing demographics of the neighborhood.

“It’s about how people support and boost other people, how friends can become family and how you measure a life by how much loving you have done,” he says.

The musical was created in the early 1990s in a white brick row house on East Fourth Street that houses the New York Theatre Workshop, still a not-for-profit incubator for new talent. Jonathan Larson, the show’s creator, worked on “Rent” in a loft rehearsal room—a space with a quaint fireplace, an upright piano, a skylight and windows that look out on a courtyard ringed by old brownstones off the once drug-infested Bowery.

“The ‘Rent’ songs capture something about those times, about that experience, that is timeless,” James Nicola, the workshop’s artistic director, says.

“Rent” dared announce that AIDS was part of America, along with drug addiction and young people fleeing middle-class suburbia to live among artsy squatters and the homeless. The show, whose title also means “torn apart,” became an emblem of Generation X the way “Hair” was a touchstone for baby boomers.

Sadly, Larson died at 35 of an aortic aneurysm just hours after the dress rehearsal for the show’s opening. Months later, “Rent” moved to Broadway, going on to win the Pulitzer Prize and four Tonys, and drawing sellout crowds for more than a decade.

With a total gross of more than $280 million on Broadway and about $340 million on the road, Broadway ticket sales had started to slip in the past half year. The producers decided the box-office take didn’t meet costs and they couldn’t keep running the show.

On a recent Saturday evening, however, the Nederlander Theatre was packed with spectators who rose to their feet to applaud a musical that continues to attract young “Rentheads,” some of whom have seen the show dozens of times.

With the musical still touring the country, most of the original cast, including Rapp, can still be seen in a 2005 movie based on the Broadway production.

Rapp, who says he considers the East Village his emotional home even though he has moved to the nearby neighborhood of NoHo, speculated about what HIV-positive Roger and Mark might be like now, with the advent of more effective AIDS drugs.

“Roger would have lived because of the new AIDS drugs and Mark might have found a way to be part of the new media,” he said.

Rapp, 36, has moved on to other work, but says that he and other cast members haven’t left “Rent” completely behind.

“There’s an idealism at the core of ‘Rent’ and in us,” he says. “There are so many things in our everyday life now that tell us, ‘No, no, no.’ ‘Rent’ says, ‘Yes, yes, yes!’”

Ai’s big American dreams

By CHARLIE AMTER
© 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—”So today I was thinking: `Should I speak Japanese, or English tonight?’ “ Universal Japan recording artist Ai said from the El Rey Theatre stage recently. The near-sellout crowd, mostly Japanese expatriates and Asian Americans living in Los Angeles, screamed replies, some in English, some in Japanese. “I’ll just speak music,” she said with a laugh, before launching into an up-tempo R&B jam—in Japanese with an English chorus.

And so it goes for Ai Carina Uemura, a biracial, bilingual rising R&B star in Japan, whose El Rey show was her formal U.S. debut. The singer was born in L.A., graduated from the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts (along with classmate Josh Groban) and played her most important local show to date just 12 miles away at the El Rey, in what at first looks like a classic case of local girl makes good.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Ai Carina Uemura, known as Ai, made her U.S. singing debut in Los Angeles recently. In Japan, the R&B singer is often compared to Beyonce and Alicia Keys.

Yet the road from her alma mater to the El Rey stage actually stretched about 12,000 miles: She first became a bona fide Japanese pop star in the land of her ancestors.

And now, she’s bringing the music of her native land to Japan in a way most J-pop acts can’t—with an American-bred affinity for soul and R&B music.

“Ai and Crystal Kay are the best singers in Japan today,” says L.A.-based J-pop producer Joey Carbone.

Uemura has been described by some as the Japanese answer to Beyonce for her sultry vocals and hip-hop attitude. More “fierce” than cute, Uemura evokes comparisons to Beyonce and Alicia Keys on tracks like “Butterfly”—where she effortlessly switches between Japanese and English.

The 26-year-old singer is navigating a career with feet in two worlds: in one, trying to please traditional J-pop fans with ballads; in the other, hoping to court American urban-music fans.

J-pop is typified these days by artists such as Namie Amuro, singers with reed-thin voices and a predilection for pop songs that sound forever stuck in the 1990s.

In contrast, Uemura’s music sounds fresher—a track such as “Move” off her latest release, “Don’t Stop A.I.,” wouldn’t sound out of place on a hip-hop station. Atlantic Records’ rising urban artist Trey Songz even flew in from Virginia to take the stage with Uemura at the end of her El Rey show in a surprise appearance.

But Uemura, for now, is focused on the land of the rising sun, where she is a fast-rising diva with authentic American-sounding R&B tracks that advertisers are keen to license (her songs appear in ads for Japan Air Lines and Pepsi in Japan). Her L.A. gig was a warm-up for her impending Japanese tour that opens Sunday and includes a stop at Tokyo’s famed Budokan theater.

Back in L.A., however, Uemura was more than happy to face down a rapt audience of approximately 800. “This is really special for me,” she said from the small El Rey stage, where she all but owned the female-heavy crowd, most of whom were hungry for a taste of Nippon via R&B ballads such as her 2005 smash “Story.” The ballad sold 300,000 copies as a single in Japan and has been downloaded more than 3.5 million times, according to her label.

“Don’t Stop A.I.,” released Dec. 5, mostly shies away from ballads and hints at the hip-hop-centric sound Uemura fell in love with when she lived in Los Angeles.

“Given Ai’s English skills and American background, she stands a better chance than most Japanese artists of breaking overseas,” says Billboard’s Asia bureau chief, Steve McClure.

But will American record labels, or fans, listen to rap in a language other than English? While her Japanese contemporaries might insert a few English phrases into their songs, it can ring false to increasingly sophisticated Japanese music consumers.

“When the singer who isn’t native sings any English lyrics, we feel as if it weren’t true,” says 31-year-old R&B fan Teru Okamoto via e-mail from Tokyo. “But in her case, she can speak English and Japanese fluently and also has good sense of R&B.”

This is Uemura’s edge in Japan; and now possibly in the U.S. in a reverse twist—where all things Japanese are increasingly appealing to YouTube savvy tweens raised on anime and PlayStation.

For now, Uemura seems content to satiate her Japanese audience while slowly building an American fan base.

Spears' dad, lawyer trade legal barbs

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Britney Spears' father and a lawyer who claims to represent her traded legal barbs Monday in an intensifying fight over whether James Spears is violating her civil rights by controlling her finances and life.

Attorney John Eardley, who told The Associated Press he was the "only person who represents Britney Spears," filed documents in federal court asserting that she is being held by her father in a situation that violates her civil rights.

A lawyer for James Spears said in papers filed Monday that Eardley cannot represent the singer because a probate judge in state court found that Britney Spears "lacks the capacity to hire an attorney, and Mr. Eardley cannot remove the conservatorship proceedings on his own behalf."

The pop star, 26, and her estate were placed under a temporary conservatorship after she was taken to UCLA Medical Center on Jan. 31, her second hospitalization in a month. Conservatorships are granted for people deemed unable to care for themselves or their affairs.

AP

Singer Britney Spears poses on the press line at the Scandinavian Style Mansion party in Los Angeles in this Dec. 1, 2007 file photo.

Eardley took aim at James Spears in legal documents filed Friday.

"Mr. Spears has now moved into her house and has taken control of her financial assets, as well as her physical custody, all without the benefit of a hearing where Ms. Spears would be present," he said.

Eardley said that Spears has never been on good terms with her father and said he was "concerned for the emotional and physical safety of Britney under these circumstances."

In his motion, Eardley said Spears had "been in a form of private confinement for nearly a month. Certainly, at this point, it is likely that circumstances have changed and it is time that the conservatee be brought into court for a hearing, where the court can evaluate her in person and hear testimony directly from her."

The document suggests she be allowed to retain her own medical professionals to evaluate her condition.

"There are financial issues which involve the possible misappropriation of assets," Eardley said but did not elaborate.

Meanwhile, attorney Jeffrey Wexler, representing James Spears, filed a response Monday complaining that the effort to move the case to federal court is without legal basis and is draining James Spears financially.

Wexler said that the conservator has already incurred more than $42,898 in legal fees to fight the effort launched by Eardley. Wexler argued the law being cited by Eardley applies only to cases of racial discrimination.

James Spears has asked to send the matter back to state court and to award him attorneys' fees.

In the phone interview Eardley said he had filed additional documents under seal Monday and expected a hearing to be set soon.

Asked when he last consulted with Britney Spears, Eardley said, "I talked to her a few days ago and someone wrestled the phone away from her. I've not talked to her since then."

Valerie Bertinelli: I cheated, too

CHICAGO (AP)—Valerie Bertinelli says despite her girl-next-door image, her marriage to Eddie Van Halen was hurt by infidelity and drug use—by her, too. "I wasn't an angel, either. I cheated, too," Bertinelli said on "The Oprah Winfrey Show" broadcast Monday. "He claims to this day that I cheated first, but I don't know. I don't know about the timing."

Bertinelli, who starred in the long-running sitcom "One Day at a Time," married Van Halen in 1981 when she was 20. She said she was "destroying my body," trying to keep up with a rock-star lifestyle on the weekends and weeks off from taping her TV show.

"It got to a point where whenever I heard the birds chirp, I'd be like, `Oh, God, no.' It took me years after stopping the cocaine before I was able to enjoy a sunrise and enjoy the sound of birds," she said.

The couple separated in 2001. Their divorce became final in December. They have a son, Wolfgang, who's now 16 and touring as bassist with the band Van Halen.

The actress, 47, said she has struggled with body-image issues since she was a child, but especially turned to food for comfort as her marriage dissolved.

Bertinelli is now a spokeswoman for Jenny Craig and said she's lost 40 pounds. She has a new book, "Losing It: And Gaining My Life Back One Pound at a Time."

Van Halen's publicist said the musician had no comment on Bertinelli's book or interviews to promote it.

AP

Valerie Bertinelli, left, is shown with Eddie Van Halen in Los Angeles in this July 17, 2001, file photo.

5 winners at Met auditions

NEW YORK (AP)—Five singers 28 and under were picked as winners of the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions and were awarded $15,000 each.

Tenor Rene Barbera of San Antonio, Texas; mezzo-sopranos Jennifer Johnson of St. Louis and Daveda Karanas of Mandeville, La.; soprano Simone Osborne of Vancouver, British Columbia; and baritone Edward Parks of Indiana, Pa., were selected after performing Sunday at the Met.

About 1,500 singers participated in the contest. Past winners include Renee Fleming, Deborah Voigt, Stephanie Blythe, Dolora Zajick, Ben Heppner, Thomas Hampson and Samuel Ramey.

Esteban Cortazar takes on Ungaro

PARIS (AP)—French fashion label Emanuel Ungaro, which has been struggling for direction since the retirement of its founder, is gambling on U.S. design wunderkind Esteban Cortazar to bring it the elusive "It" factor.

At 23, the Colombian-born Cortazar becomes the youngest designer to head a major fashion label. In an interview with The Associated Press, the newcomer to Paris said he was taking it all in his stride.

"I think the younger you are, the less pressure you feel," Cortazar said between fittings at Ungaro's headquarters on the swish avenue Montaigne. "It's definitely a challenge, but it's a fun challenge."

Cortazar is used to making history; in 2002, he became the youngest-ever designer to show at New York Fashion Week.

Celebrities including Eva Longoria, Paris Hilton and Beyonce Knowles are fans of his work and his designs have been featured on the TV show "Sex and the City."

In Europe, however, Cortazar is still an unknown quantity. He takes the helm at Ungaro after a period of turmoil; the label changed designers three times in as many years.

For his first collection, he avoided delving into the archives and just followed his instinct.

"I felt that I was so naturally and organically inspired by this house, because it is very much my aesthetic as a designer, to dress a woman that loves to be a woman. So I felt comfortable to just come in and give my vision," he explained.

Cortazar's effortlessly sexy designs are inspired by the city of Miami, Florida, where he moved from his native Bogota at the age of 10. The son of a jazz singer and an artist, he showed his first creations at his elementary school at 13.

The ebullient designer would seem a natural fit for Ungaro, which is famed for its vivid prints and Grecian-style draping, but has lost its sizzle in recent years. Cortazar is keenly aware that the label needs a shot in the arm.

"No. 1, I want to make Ungaro cool," he bluntly said. "But I think the most important thing here is unapologetic femininity. This woman is unapologetically feminine, she's sensual and she's alluring. It's an ultimate celebration of life."

Girlfriend's new figure gets too much exposure at dinner

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My son's girlfriend, "Liza," had her breasts enlarged several years ago. Her entire wardrobe now consists of clothing with plunging necklines that expose most of her "assets." Don't get me wrong. I don't expect Liza to wear turtlenecks, just to cover up some.

Whenever there's a family function, there "they" are for all to see. My husband and the siblings (all over 18) have talked about how uncomfortable that makes them. This is not one of those things that you can just turn your head from, especially when Liza is sitting across the table at dinner.

My son doesn't have a problem with it, but I would like to know if there's something you would suggest I could say—either to her or my son—to let them know how uncomfortable we are without making it sound like we're attacking her?

—COVER UP, PLEASE, IN ALABAMA

DEAR "C.U.P.": Liza has invested a lot of money—not to mention the pain—in acquiring those assets. She wouldn't be human if she didn't want to display them. However, because you feel you're seeing too much of a good thing, approach your son about asking his girlfriend to dress a little more conservatively at dinner. If that doesn't do the trick, lower the temperature when they're over and hand her a sweater—or serve lobster and hand out bibs.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My fiance bought a ring and necklace for me for Valentine's Day. The ring was to be a wedding ring. Both are yellow gold, which is something I have never worn, nor do I care to.

The first ring he selected was white gold. Then he decided that with the yellow gold, he would get "more bang for his buck." A friend of ours, "Diana," went with him and told me the story. I told Diana I'm thinking of asking him to return the items and have the two of us look for a white gold set. Her response? "You'd better shut up and wear them. He may send you packing if you hurt his feelings."

Abby, it's only a request, but this will be a lifelong remembrance for me to wear. What should I do?

—IN A TIZZY IN OKLAHOMA CITY

DEAR IN A TIZZY: I'm guessing your boyfriend took Diana to help with the selection because he thought she'd know what you like. Frankly, he took the wrong girl. He should have taken you.

If Diana is truly a friend, she should tell him she "forgot" that you have a strong preference for white gold and suggest the two of you exchange the set for something you might like better.

While some readers may not agree, not all surprises turn out to be pleasant ones. The most practical way to choose wedding/engagement rings is for the man to talk to a jeweler in advance about what he can afford to pay and ask that a selection of rings in his price range be put aside for him and his girlfriend when he brings her in. That way, she can have something she will enjoy wearing, he won't feel pressured into spending more than he can afford, and everybody's happy.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: When a person cooks a meal, isn't it also his or her responsibility to do the dishes when the meal is finished? If not, then who should? I think the cook should be responsible.

—BOILING OVER IN ST. LOUIS

DEAR BOILING OVER: And I think the person who EATS the meal should volunteer to clear the table and help with the dishes.

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT, HOBBES? MOM AND DAD ASKED ROSALYN TO BABY-SIT US!
THERE'S JUST ONE THING TO DO. WE'LL MAIL OURSELVES TO AUSTRALIA. CLIMB IN.
JUST PUT US OUT BY THE MAILBOX, MOM
STOP BEING SILLY, CALVIN. WHERE'S ROSALYN? I THOUGHT YOU SAID SHE WAS HERE.
AS FAR AS I KNOW, SHE'S STILL ON THE FRONT PORCH. WHY?
YOU DIDN'T EVEN LET HER IN?!
DING DONG DING DONG

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

I WOULDN'T SIT THERE IF I WERE YOU.
EVEN THOUGH HE'S NOT HERE, THAT PARTICULAR SEAT IS ALWAYS UNOFFICIALLY RESERVED FOR BIG DWAYNE. BIG DWAYNE HAS THE MOST SENIORITY OF ANY CUSTOMER HERE.
UNLESS HE WALKS IN, I SERIOUSLY DOUBT BIG DWAYNE WILL FIND OUT.
HAVE IT YOUR WAY.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

PLEASE PROTECT ME FROM SEVERE STOMACH CRAMPS...
...AND PLEASE BOOST MY IMMUNE SYSTEM, SUPPRESS MY GAG REFLEX AND NUMB MY TASTE BUDS. AMEN.
YOU DON'T GET TO SAY GRACE ANYMORE.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

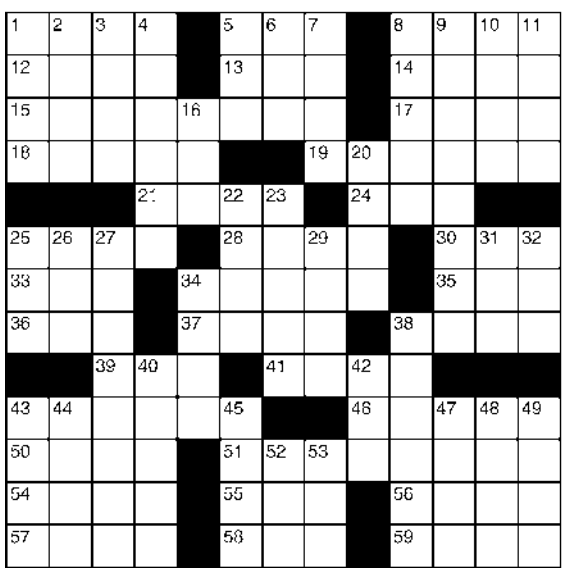
ACROSS
1 Caprice
5 Golf ball's position
8 Kermit, for one
12 Teensy bit
13 Biz letterhead abbr.
14 Calm before the storm
15 Yukon event
17 Gilligan's home
18 Spread out
19 Foster-home dweller, maybe
21 Utter disarray
24 Doctrine
25 Unaltered
28 A little lower?
30 Make up your mind
33 Berlin's "What'll —?"
34 Andrews or Newmar
35 Sought office
36 Standard
37 "— Old Cowhand"
38 Banter
39 Early bird?
41 Finished
43 French writer
46 Held the deed to
50 Center of activity
51 One way to order 39-Across
54 A very long time
55 Wray of "King Kong"
56 Lo-cal
57 Small pie
58 Exploit
59 Coaster

DOWN
1 Perukes
2 Basketball target
3 "— do for now"
4 Female title
5 Lucy of "Cashmere Mafia"
6 Office-holders
7 Reverberate
8 Buys and resells fast
9 Famous rock quartet?
10 — podrida
11 Singer Campbell
16 Catcher's place?
20 Abundant
22 Dross
23 Dieter's entree
25 Try the Tokay
26 Oklahoma city
27 Not only that, but
29 Kitchen flooring, for short
31 It may be faux
32 Stick with a kick
34 Leprechauns' dances
38 Tiffany merchandise
40 Visitor
42 Neither mate
43 Very good, in rap
44 Latvia's capital
45 Bean curd
47 Get down pat
48 Villa d' —
49 Went blonde
52 Anatomical duct
53 Storm center

Solution time: 21 mins.

E	G	A	D	■	B	A	S	■	S	O	D	A
R	E	N	O	■	A	R	K	■	I	B	.	S
G	F	N	T	R	I	F	Y	■	N	O	A	H
■	■	■	C	U	T	■	I	■	K	F	I	Y
C	A	N	O	E	■	J	I	V	E	■	■	■
L	O	O	M	■	G	E	N	E	R	O	U	S
O	N	O	■	D	A	W	E	S	■	P	R	O
G	E	N	I	U	S	E	S	■	D	E	A	L
■	■	■	T	E	L	L	■	L	A	D	L	E
A	L	K	A	L	I	■	I	A	M	■	■	■
R	E	A	L	■	G	E	N	D	A	R	M	E
M	A	L	I	■	H	R	S	■	S	H	O	E
S	P	E	C	■	T	A	T	■	K	O	O	K

Yesterday's answer 2-27



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Rozonda "Chilli" Thomas, 37; Adam Baldwin, 46; Ralph Nader, 74; Elizabeth Taylor, 76

Happy Birthday: Your unique way of helping others will bring special rewards your way this year. The more you can do from your home, the better. Work on a tight budget and don't let other colleagues or friends depress you. Protection, patience and prudence should all be factored in this year. Your numbers are 12, 15, 20, 39, 45, 49

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Be more secretive about your finances. You will face emotional and financial deception that will leave you in a precarious position. Don't feel pressured to make a move if you aren't ready. You should stay busy. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): You will be totally stressed out if you take the people around you too seriously. Separate and sort through the issues as they arise. The action you take now will determine what happens down the road. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Don't give in to someone who wants you to slack off when you have so much to gain by working hard today. You'll have some great ideas that will gain interest from people who can influence your future. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): An opportunity is there for the taking but, if you are reluctant to take a chance or make a change, you may miss out. Do all those things you've been talking about but haven't followed through with. Get serious about what you want. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Taking on more than you can handle will lead to emotional issues. If you decide to become aggressive, you aren't likely to win. You will put someone off with your demands. You are far better off taking care of yourself and chilling out. ✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Check out what others have to say and to contribute. Once you know where you stand, you can make a clear decision. An opportunity must be jumped on, especially if it will help you expand your circle of friends. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Organization will help you get what you want. A love relationship is taking an interesting turn. Don't get emotional but do let your true feelings be known. A creative endeavor will be well received and have the potential to make you some cash. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): You won't be seeing things clearly today. Someone you are close to may try to ruin your plans. Be a little secretive about your comings and goings and you will accomplish far more in the end. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Lean toward people who have a serious attitude and you will get the help, information or insight you've been searching for. A little fun mixed into your work will help those around you see you in a different light. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): A chance to settle something that has been pending will be made available to you.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

COPYRIGHT 2007 UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Don't feel you have to go it alone, especially when emotional issues are involved. A change will be as good as a rest. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Listen to what someone close to you has to say. You may not like what you hear but there will be a certain amount of validity to the information given. Use this insight with your own strategy and you will find your way. ✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Don't be fooled by a get-rich-quick idea. Instead, invest in a sure thing. The wrong choice will lead to arguments with family. An older or experienced individual will help you out. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are emotional, relentless and determined to get things done your way. You are willing to go the distance and do things differently. You are a protector, a crusader and a leader.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			4	9	3			
		8				1		
	9	5				2	7	
1								9
2								7
	6	9	2		7	4	1	
			1		8			
		4				7		
		6	9	4	2	5		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/27

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	4	5	7	3	8	2	9	1
3	8	1	4	2	9	6	5	7
9	7	2	5	1	6	3	8	4
5	2	8	1	9	3	7	4	6
1	9	3	6	7	4	5	2	8
4	6	7	2	8	5	1	3	9
8	1	9	3	5	7	4	6	2
7	5	6	8	4	2	9	1	3
2	3	4	9	6	1	8	7	5

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/26

©2007 Conceptis Puzzles, Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc.

WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

LOVE ONLINE — Solution: 11 letters

P	D	R	E	B	M	E	M	D	N	M	S	A	F	E
V	I	B	E	O	U	S	Y	(A)	N	S	A	R	R	S
E	N	H	V	A	E	I	M	T	(G)	E	T	E	I	I
G	N	I	S	D	D	E	L	N	I	(E)	S	E	E	T
A	E	L	O	N	G	F	I	D	S	C	(S)	R	N	R
S	R	C	E	J	O	L	R	G	N	I	T	A	D	E
S	U	R	T	N	E	I	N	E	V	N	O	C	L	V
E	T	R	C	E	M	T	T	W	E	L	H	A	A	D
M	R	O	F	P	L	E	G	A	N	A	M	L	E	A
A	T	M	R	V	I	E	W	R	L	T	A	L	R	C
I	I	E	E	T	P	M	P	M	A	E	I	A	E	C
L	S	K	M	A	R	R	Y	H	E	F	R	U	P	O
S	I	N	G	L	E	S	C	M	O	V	E	G	Y	U
L	V	E	K	K	P	U	O	R	G	N	I	H	T	N
T	E	S	D	A	E	H	P	N	G	H	E	A	R	T

© 2008 Universal Press Syndicate www.wonderword.com 2/27

Account, Advertise, Ages, Build, Call, Career, Chat, City, Codes, Convenient, Dating, Dinner, Feelings, Form, Free, Friend, Group, Headset, Heart, Home, Impress, Join, Late, Laugh, Like, Long, Mail, Manage, Marry, Meet, Member, Message, Move, Movies, Name, Page, Profile, Read, Real, Relationship, Safe, Send, Sign, Singles, Surf, Talk, Telephone, Trend, Type, Vibe, View, Visit, Warm

Yesterday's Answer: Designers

Treasury 5 is here! Send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 postage and handling each ($4.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the new volume. $1 off per book for each additional volume to: Universal Press Syndicate, Attn: Wonderword, 4520 Main St., Kansas City, Mo. 64111 or call toll-free, 1-800-255-5731, ext. 6333. Order online at puzzles.com.

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR RENT - RESIDENTIAL

Apartment room for rent: Fully furnished 1 brm, T/B, 24-hr water $210/month, near Conwood | Tel. 287-1372, 235-6748

Apartment Room for Rent
2 bed room $230.00, Koblerville.
Contact: 288-0728.

FOR SALE - COMMERCIAL

Bud's Bar For Sell. $20,000 or best offer. You must see to appreciate. #898-4866/233-1113

BUSINESS SERVICES

BEAT THE HIGH COST OF GAS!
Visit: http://paquino.ffivideo.com
Business Opportunity-Be A Distributor

EMPLOYMENT

Tony Roma's/Capricciosa ACCOUNTANT
BS Acctg, CPA/foreign equiv pref. Min 2 yrs exp.
MS Excel/Word/Outlook. Great comm skills.
Valid driver's license. Police clearance required.
Email resume to mjg@wdiusa.com. Fax 322-7517
NO PHONE CALLS PLEASE.

USSP Club Needs
(1) Bartender, (2) Waitresses
More Info: Call Rose/233-1984

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

1 MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (W 80669)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Pacific Amusement, Inc. @233-4397.

1 COMPUTER TECHNICIAN (W 80670)
Salary:$3.55-$5.45/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Pacific Amusement, Inc. @233-4397.

1 ELECTRONIC TECHNICIAN (W 80671)
Salary:$3.55-$7.16/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Pacific Amusement, Inc. @233-4397.

---

1 ELECTRICIAN (W 80672)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; employee provided food; health & workers compensation employer provided. Contact: Glicerio D. Arago dba NCI Contractor @287-0847/233-2652.

---

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (W 80673)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; workers compensation & medical. Contact: Palm Springs Life Extension, Inc. dba Palm Springs SPA, Retail Health Products, Skin Care @233-5317.

---

1 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (W 80674)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen compensation employer provided. Contact: Nero S. Ortizo dba Big Brother Auto Shop @483-7501/898-4110.

---

1 (ASSISTANT) MANAGER (W 80675)
Salary:$4.00/hour. Benefits: Medical & workers compensation provided. Contact: Saipan Magellan, Inc. dba Saipan Magellan Tour/Apples Bar & Rest. @285-7898.

---

2 SOIL CONSERVATIONIST (W 80676)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation provided. Contact: Tropex Garden Co., Ltd. @288-7999.

---

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (WF 0001)
Salary:$4:00-4.05/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical & workers compensation provided by employer. Contact: Saipan International School dba SIS @ 288-9660.

---

1 SEWING MACHINE OPERATOR (MW 0001)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Medical & workmen's compensation. Contact: Twin Star Gift Shop @484-0616.

---

3 STOREKEEPER (MW 0002)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self arranged food; medical & workman's compensation provided. Contact: Martha's Retail Shop Inc. @234-9774.

---

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (MW 0003)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provide housing; self provide food; medical & workman's compensation provided. Contact: LHD Corporation dba Tease @233-8838.

---

4 SINGER (MW 0004)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provide food; medical & workman's compensation provided. Contact: Ameriana Corporation dba Club Happiness @234-6913.

4 WAITRESS/WAITER (MW 0005)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provide food; medical & workman's compensation provided. Contact: Ameriana Corporation dba Club Happiness @234-6913.

1 HOUSEKEEPING CLEANER (MW 0006)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provide housing; self provide food; medical & workman's compensation provided. Contact: Ameriana Corporation @234-6913.

---

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (MW 0007)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self provided food; employer provided workers compensation insurance & medical. Contact: Genpro International, Inc. @288-3820.

---

3 COOK (MW 0008)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provide housing; self provide food; medical & workman's compensation provided. Contact: Emperor Enterprises Corp. dba Furusato Restaurant @233-3333.

1 BUILDING MAINTENANCE REPAIRER (MW 0009)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provide housing; self provide food; medical & workman's compensation provided. Contact: Emperor Enterprises Corp. dba Furusato Restaurant @233-3333.

---

1 GARDENER (MW 0010)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self provide housing; self provide food; medical & workman's compensation provided. Contact: James/Penny Hofschneider @234-8040.

---

2 SALES REPRESENTATIVE (MW 0011)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Workmen's compensation; bonding & medical (as per contract). Contact: Philpan International Corp. dba MC-Asia Int'l @235-6100/6695.

WHATZIT Solution:
Pluck up courage

---

3 LAUNDRY WORKER (WF 0002)
Salary:$3,55-$5.00/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; medical insurance; workers compensation; sick leave & vacation leave. Contact: Tropical Laundry & Linen Supply Co., Ltd. @322-3077/8.

---

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (WF 0003)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; free food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Alma N. Indalecio dba A&F Janitorial Services @286-5518.

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (WF 0004)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; free food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Alma N. Indalecio dba A&F Janitorial Services @286-5518.

1 COMMERCIAL CLEANER (WF 0005)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; free food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Alma N. Indalecio dba A&F Janitorial Services @286-5518.

---

1 KITCHEN HELPER (WF 0006)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; free food; medical & workers compensation. Contact: Alma N. Indalecio dba A&F Food Express Catering @286-5518.

---

1 ACCOUNTANT (WF 0007)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arranged housing; self provided food; medical & workmen's compensation insurance provided. Contact: Shun Yi American Corp. dba Mellinium Catering/Restaurant @285-1519.

---

1 GEN. MANAGER (WF 0008)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Employer housing; employee food; medical & worksmen compensation. Contact: Vargas Corporation @235-0297.

---

1 STEELWORKER (WF 0009)
Salary:$3.75-$4.00/hour. Benefits: Medical & worksmen compensation. Contact: Hayden Corporation @234-7900.

---

1 YARD MAINTENANCE (WF 0010)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self arrange housing; self arrange food; self arrange transportation; workmens compensation & medical expense. Contact: Micronesia Woodcraft Ent., Inc. dba Woodcraft and Handicraft @235-7631.

---

1 BIOMEDICAL (SERVICE ENGINEER) TECHNICIAN (WF 0011)
Salary:$5.00-$15.00/hour. Benefits: Self provided housing; self provided food; workers compensation as required by law & medical coverage as required by law. Contact: Pacific Biomedical Services, inc. dba PBSI @288-0566.

---

1 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT (WF 0012)
Salary:$3.55/hour. Benefits: Self housing; self food; medical & workmen compensation. Contact: Feng Hua Ent., Inc. dba Feng Hua Market @235-9147.

LOST PASSPORT

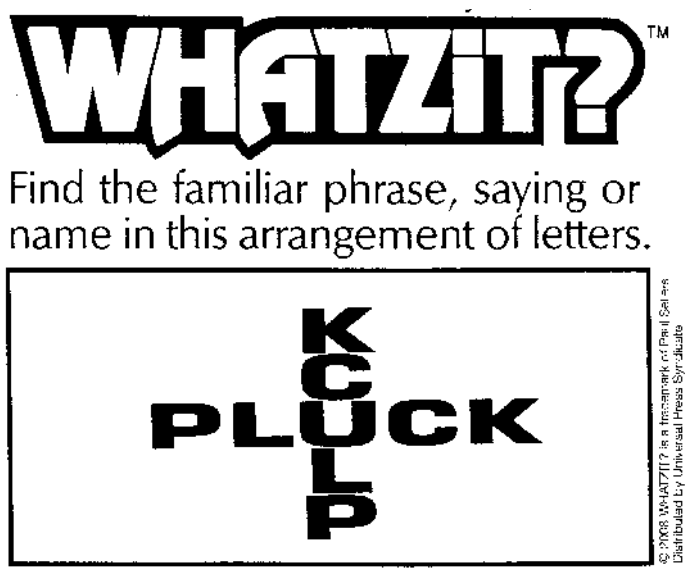
Name : Xiaoxia Wang
Date of Birth : January 12, 1977
Passport No. : G10227589
Contact No. : 235-6242

WANTED: Accountant

Qualifications

- Minimum 2 years manufacturing accounting experience
- Familiarity with Peachtree Premium accounting software and Point of Sale system
- Demonstrated understanding of integrated perpetual inventory accounting, invoicing, accounts receivables, and accounts payable
- Extensive knowledge of accounting principles, practices and the analysis and reporting of financial data
- Must be a team player in a fast-paced work environment

Submit cover letter, resume and any related materials in Adobe Acrobat or MS Word format via email to:
670employment@gmail.com.


WHATZIT?™
Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.
KC
PLUCK
LP
©2008 WHATZIT? is a trademark of Paul Saltzman
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Find today's solution in this section

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

All job vacancy announcements will be published for two issues in each of two successive weeks.

1st position	**$13.00**
2nd position	**$5.00**
Succeeding positions	**$2.00**

These rates apply to all job vacancy announcements in Saipan that include corresponding benefits and which positions are all under the same company name and dba.

Newspaper clippings are also available for $.25 per copy.

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Job Vacancy Announcements

Monday Through Friday Issues: All ads placed before 12 noon will come out the next publication date.

Saturday And Sunday Issues:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on either Sunday or Monday issues.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Kidd returns to Dallas with a victory

DALLAS (AP)—Welcome back Jason Kidd. In his first home game with the Dallas Mavericks in more than 11 years, Kidd had 11 points with nine rebounds and eight assists in a 102-94 victory over the Chicago Bulls on Monday night.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 29 points for the Mavericks, who never trailed after Kidd had an assist on Josh Howard's 3-pointer that opened the scoring a minute into the game and won their 11th straight home game.

Kidd came up short of his 100th career triple-double, but was involved in significant plays throughout the game as Chicago kept coming back from double-digit deficit.

After Ben Gordon's 3-pointer got the Bulls within 86-77, Kidd saved a loose ball on the Dallas end and got it to Nowitzki for a 3-pointer with about 5 minutes left.

Before Chicago had closed to nine, the Mavericks had scored eight straight points: Josh Howard drove for a short jumper, Nowitzki grabbed a rebound and threw a long pass ahead to Jason Terry for a breakway layup, then Terry had a steal and threw a similar pass to Kidd for a layup before Nowitzki's jumper.

Jerry Stackhouse has 23 points and Howard had 16 while Terry had 11 points and six assists. Before fouling out with 1:18 left, Erick Dampier set season highs with 16 rebounds and seven blocked shots.

Gordon had 25 points to lead five Chicago players in double figures. Drew Gooden had 17 and Larry Hughes had 14. Luol Deng and Thabo Sefolosha were the only Bulls starters in double figures, with 10 points each.

AP

Dallas Mavericks' Jason Kidd (2) moves the ball against Chicago Bulls' Thabo Sefolosha (2) from Switzerand in the first half of an NBA basketball game in Dallas, Monday, Feb. 25, 2008.

The Bulls were within 62-59 after Gordon hit two free throws with 4 1/2 minutes left in the third quarter. The Mavericks then scored 10 straight points, a run started with two rebounds by Kidd.

Kidd's first rebound led to a 16-foot jumper by Brandon Bass, but Kidd wasn't the only Maverick giving up the ball to teammates.

Terry then stepped into the paint and made a bounce pass back to Nowitzki for a 3-pointer, and after a steal made a lob pass to Stackhouse for an easy layup. After a Kidd steal, he went shared the ball with Terry, before Nowitzki hit another 3-pointer.

Kidd, the No. 2 overall pick by Dallas in 1994, played his first home game as a Maverick since Dec. 17, 1996, in a game at Reunion Arena, where the team played before moving to the more elaborate American Airlines Center in 2001.

Making sure fans could properly welcome him back, Kidd was the last of the Mavericks starters introduced. That spot usually belongs to Nowitzki.

Kidd got a loud rousing ovation and right away had the fans cheering again with the assist on Howard's 3-pointer. Then he followed a few minutes later with a steal after which he drove toward the lane, spun and passed back to Nowitzki, who hit the jumper.

Gordon's 14-foot jumper with 5:36 left in the first half got the Bulls within 38-33, and capped a 12-0 run in which he scored nine points.

The Mavericks responded with eight straight, Kidd's driving layup making it 46-33. Stackhouse hit a long buzzer-beating 3-pointer before halftime for a 53-43 lead.

Wizards 95, Hornets 92

At New Orleans, DeShawn Stevenson drained a fadeaway 3-pointer at the buzzer and Washington handed New Orleans its third straight loss.

Stevenson's buzzer beater capped a career night for the Wizards guard as he scored 33 points. Brendan Haywood and reserve Roger Mason scored 12 points apiece.

Chris Paul scored 22 for New Orleans.

Spurs 89, Hawks 74

At San Antonio, Tim Duncan had 23 points and 10 rebounds and San Antonio earned its season-best sixth straight win.

Tony Parker added 15 points and nine assists for the Spurs, who have lost just five games at home this season.

Joe Johnson scored 17 points for Atlanta, and reserve Zaza Pachulia tied his season high with 14 points. Rookie Al Horford added 12 points and 13 rebounds.

Raptors 102, Pacers 98

At Indianapolis, Chris Bosh had 24 points and 10 rebounds to lead Toronto to the win.

Carlos Delfino scored 23 points and made six of seven 3-pointers, and T.J. Ford added 16 points and seven assists for the Raptors, who have won all three meetings with Indiana this season.

Danny Granger and Marquis Daniels each had 20 points, and Granger added 10 rebounds for the Pacers.

Indiana led 86-84 before Toronto went on a 13-2 run that included two 3-pointers by Delfino to take a 97-88 lead with just over 4 minutes to play.

Celtics 104, Clippers 76

At Los Angeles, Paul Pierce and James Posey scored 17 points apiece to lead Boston's well-balanced offense in their rout of Los Angeles.

Fresh from ending a three-game losing streak that was their longest of the season, the Celtics had little difficulty making it two in a row. They moved in front for good five minutes into the game and improved their NBA-best record to 43-12.

Ray Allen added 15 points for Boston, and Kevin Garnett had 11 points, six rebounds and four assists in 24 minutes. Both teams used reserves for most of the final quarter.

Tim Thomas scored 14 points for the Clippers, last in the Pacific Division with a 19-35 mark.

Police: Daniels not suspect in rape case

CARMEL, Ind. (AP)—Police said Indiana Pacers guard Marquis Daniels is not a suspect in an alleged rape at his home in Carmel. Hamilton County Sheriff Doug Carter said a woman reported the rape to police Sunday after going to a hospital in Indianapolis.

The Hamilton County Sheriff's Department took over the investigation when it was determined the alleged rape had occurred during a small gathering at Daniels' home in Carmel, just north of Indianapolis.

Carter expected to release more information Tuesday.

Pistons 98, Nuggets 93

At Denver, Chauncey Billups, Tayshaun Prince and Richard Hamilton had 20 points apiece to lead Detroit over Denver.

The Nuggets had a chance to tie it when Billups fouled J.R. Smith on a 3-point attempt with 6.5 seconds left and Detroit leading 95-92. Smith made the first free throw, missed the second and intentionally missed the third, but the Nuggets couldn't get the rebound.

Billups hit three foul shots in the final seconds to seal the Pistons' third straight win.

Allen Iverson had a game-high 28 points and Carmelo Anthony had 23 for the Nuggets, who lost their third in a row.

Nuggets assistant Adrian Dantley served as the head coach because George Karl missed the game with the flu.

Giants' Michael Strahan says retirement possible

NEW YORK (AP)—Now that he has his championship, money no longer matters to Michael Strahan. Well, maybe it matters a little bit.

Not enough, though, that it will be the deciding factor as Strahan mulls retirement or returning to the Super Bowl champion Giants for a 16th season.

"If that were the reason to come back last year, I wouldn't have," the star defensive end said Monday night. "That's secondary. I want to love to play."

Strahan was loving playing by the end of last season, when New York's defense—particularly its pass rush—sparked an incredible postseason run. The Giants had won seven straight away games during the season, then eliminated Tampa Bay, Dallas and Green Bay from the playoffs, all on the road. They capped their surge with a 17-14 victory over the previously undefeated Patriots in the Super Bowl.

"I'm very proud to be a part of that," Strahan said.

Last summer, it appeared Strahan might not be a part of anything with the Giants. He sat out training camp while mulling retirement. He says it was not a money ploy, simply uncertainty whether he still had the desire to play.

He'll go through the same process this year, but promises his decision won't take anywhere near so long. After a vacation in March, Strahan said he will weigh his options and most likely let the team know by mid-April, before the NFL draft, if he is coming back.

"I have to find out I want to do it. If I do, then I will do it," he said of returning to the only pro team's he's suited up with. "I don't want to be a used-to-be or a has-been."

Quitting now would be a great way to leave, just as John Elway and Jerome Bettis have done in the last decade. Strahan doesn't necessarily see it as a perfect departure.

"It's not romantic to me," he said. "I guess you couldn't do any better than ride off into the sunset as a champion and it could be a way I want to end it. There are days I want to hang up my helmet, and then there are days I would want to keep at it."

None of his teammates at the premiere screening of the Giants' 2007 season DVD would hold it against Strahan if he didn't return. Fellow end Osi Umenyiora, the team's only Pro Bowl player, at first laughed loudly when asked about Strahan's future.

"He's coming back. Don't listen to all that," Umenyiora said.

What's the incentive for Strahan to keep playing at age 37?

"Another ring," Umenyiora insisted. "If we're able to keep this team together, I think we will be able to compete for the next five years."

Strahan certainly won't be around that long. He mentioned becoming a media member when he leaves the game.

"If I did retire, I'd probably be the one asking the questions," he said with a laugh, "and having athletes yell back at me."

If retirement happens this year, Strahan has no doubt he's leaving the Giants in good hands.

Lawyer: Bush skips scheduled deposition

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Reggie Bush failed to show up for a scheduled deposition on Monday, the latest twist in the civil lawsuit against the former Heisman Trophy winner who allegedly accepted cash and gifts from sports marketers during his sophomore and junior seasons at Southern California.

"He literally ran from his deposition," said Brian Watkins, the attorney for sports marketer Lloyd Lake, who is suing Bush.

Watkins said he received a fax from one of Bush's attorneys saying the New Orleans Saints' running back wouldn't be coming.

Bush's attorney, David Cornwell, declined to comment.

"I have nothing to provide for you," Cornwell said when reached on his cell phone.

Watkins requested that Bush bring extensive financial records, including those documenting the purchase of a car, as well as canceled rent checks for the suburban San Diego home where his parents lived and for a condo in Los Angeles.

Lake is seeking to recoup some $291,000 in cash and gifts the star running back and his family allegedly accepted from Lake and his former partner, Michael Michaels, while Bush was at USC.

Lake claims he gave Bush cash to buy a car and that Michaels allowed Bush's parents to live rent-free in a San Diego-area home. Lake and Michaels were trying to attract Bush as a client for their marketing firm, New Era.

Michaels settled with Bush in 2007.

The latest development came 13 days after Lake and Watkins walked out of a deposition after a man accompanying Cornwell opened his jacket to expose a pistol.

Watkins said Bush's lawyers are trying to keep transcripts of Bush's deposition from being given to the NCAA.

"The NCAA has asked for a copy of Reggie Bush's deposition transcripts. I told them we will definitely consider it," Watkins said. "They want to prevent that from happening."

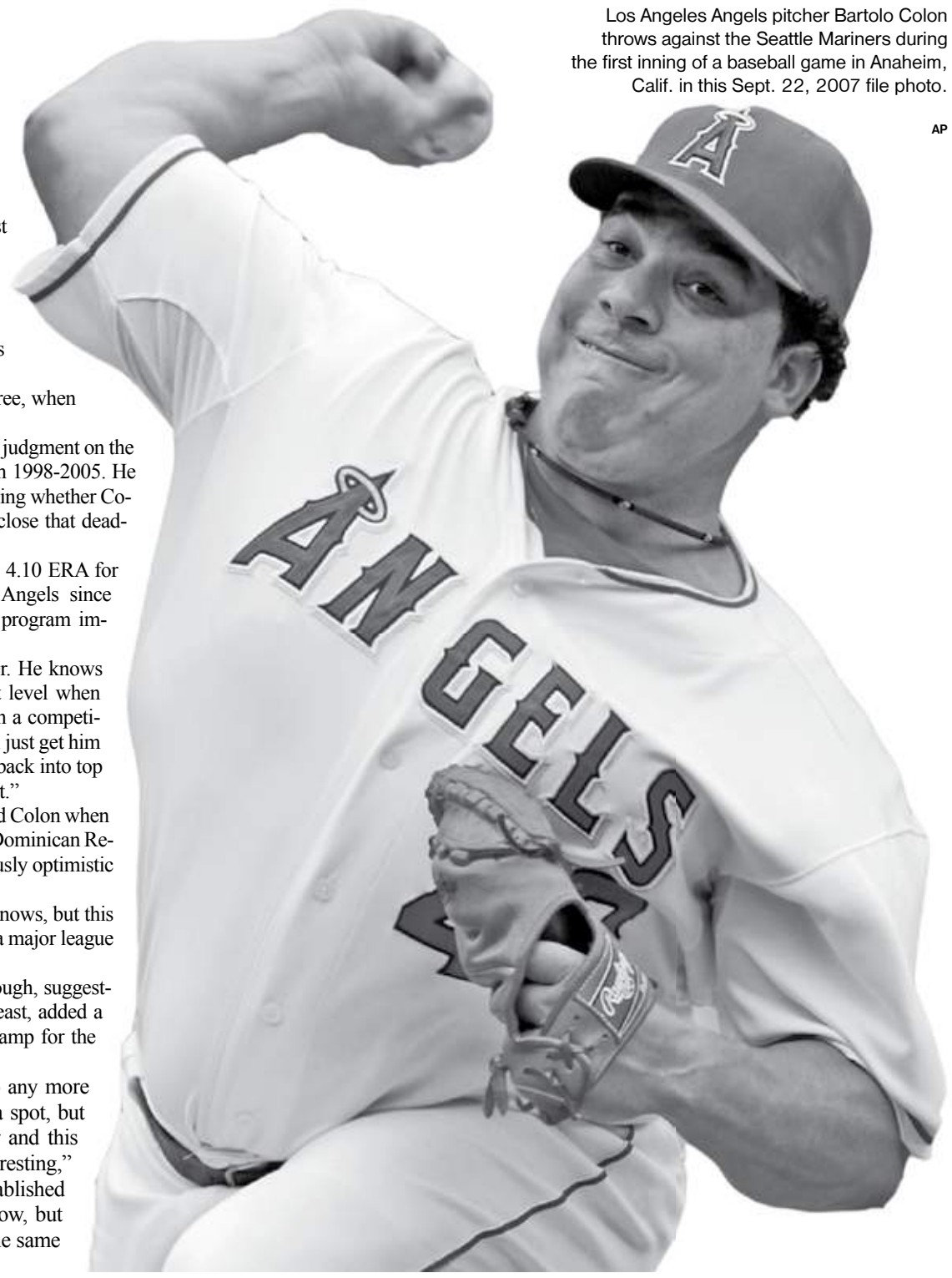
The NCAA and Pac-10 are investigating whether Bush and his parents took improper benefits during the 2004 and 2005 seasons. Bush has not met with NCAA and Pac-10 investigators.

Bush has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing.

If Bush is found retroactively ineligible, he could lose his Heisman.

If the NCAA determines that USC violated rules, the football program could have to forfeit victories from those seasons—when the Trojans won a national championship and lost in the BCS title game against Texas—and face additional penalties.

BoSox, Colon agree on minor league deal



Los Angeles Angels pitcher Bartolo Colon throws against the Seattle Mariners during the first inning of a baseball game in Anaheim, Calif. in this Sept. 22, 2007 file photo.

AP

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP)—The Boston Red Sox are taking a "no-risk, high-reward" shot on Bartolo Colon. The Red Sox came to terms Monday on a minor league contract with the 2005 Cy Young Award winner. The 34-year-old righty, who last pitched on Feb. 6 in the Caribbean World Series, is expected to arrive in camp Tuesday.

The team's medical staff will evaluate the two-time All-Star, who has gone 7-13 with a 5.72 ERA while slowed by shoulder and elbow injuries the past two seasons. He went 6-8 with a 6.34 ERA in the final year of a four-year, $51 million deal with the Los Angeles Angels last season. If he is added to the Red Sox 40-man roster, he would get a $1.2 million, one-year contract and have the chance to earn performance and roster bonuses.

If healthy, Colon is expected to provide depth for a rotation that may be without Curt Schilling, who is rehabbing a shoulder injury, for all of the upcoming season. Rookie Clay Buchholz, who tossed a no-hitter in his second major league start last season, is the front-runner for the fifth spot behind Josh Beckett, Daisuke Matsuzaka, Tim Wakefield and Jon Lester.

"He's going to show up here in camp and we'll do an evaluation of how far he is away from helping us," general manager Theo Epstein said. "It takes more than five starting pitchers to get through a season. Obviously, he's an accomplished guy and if we can get him back to a point where he's throwing well, he can certainly help us."

Epstein said Red Sox scouts came back with "decent" reports from Colon's performance in the Caribbean Series, where the burly right-hander's fastball reached the low 90s mph after elbow inflammation kept him off the Angels' playoff roster in the fall.

Those evaluations, coupled with a conference call between Colon, Epstein and manager Terry Francona last week, convinced the parties to move forward.

"I think he had some things to sort out," Francona said. "We just wanted to sell the Boston situation, at the same time being very honest and making sure he knew he was welcome."

His new teammates said as much Monday.

"You take your chances with a guy who was a Cy Young a couple years ago," said first baseman Sean Casey, who came up through the Indians minor league system with Colon. "I don't know if those injuries set him back, but if he's got that stuff, his fastball is so live. He's got electric stuff when he's healthy."

The team will find out, to some degree, when he arrives for his physical.

Until then, Epstein said, he'd reserve judgment on the game's second-winningest pitcher from 1998-2005. He said the club has set a date for determining whether Colon can contribute, but declined to disclose that deadline.

Colon, who has gone 146-95 with a 4.10 ERA for the Indians, Expos, White Sox and Angels since 1994, is expected to start a throwing program immediately.

"He knows he's a big league pitcher. He knows he can pitch effectively at the highest level when he's healthy, and he wanted to do so in a competitive environment," Epstein said. "We'll just get him here and outline a program to get him back into top pitching shape and see what comes of it."

Francona, who first saw a 23-year-old Colon when he was "throwing 1,000 (mph)" in the Dominican Republic in 1996, said he was also cautiously optimistic about the two-time 20-game winner.

"Best case?" Francona said. "Who knows, but this kid's got a good history behind him as a major league pitcher."

Buchholz might have put it best, though, suggesting that the addition has, at the very least, added a fresh story to what's been a tranquil camp for the defending champs.

"I don't think anybody needs to do any more than they're supposed to do to win a spot, but he's obviously a really good pitcher and this is just going to make it more interesting," Buchholz said. "He's been an established big league pitcher for a long time now, but I've still got to go out there and do the same things to succeed."

La Russa says he had interest in Bonds

JUPITER, Fla. (AP)—St. Louis Cardinals manager Tony La Russa had interest in signing Barry Bonds the last two offseasons, but each time the team's front office decided against it.

La Russa, who was looking for a power bat to protect No. 3 hitter Albert Pujols each year, said he was told the asking price for the home run king was too high. This winter, La Russa said he dropped the issue after a discussion with new general manager John Mozeliak.

"It became moot as soon as I raised it and they said no," La Russa said Sunday. "Once it became apparent what the price tag was, I said we just can't, it doesn't make sense for our club."

The Cardinals will likely bat Troy Glaus cleanup spot behind Pujols. Glaus was acquired from the Blue Jays for disgruntled Scott Rolen.

Before going to management, La Russa said he polled his coaches on their interest in Bonds. He said some were in favor, some not.

Bonds, who broke Hank Aaron's career home run record with the San Francisco Giants last August, remains on the free agent market while under federal indictment on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice.

Bonds has pleaded not guilty to the charges stemming from testimony to a federal grand jury in 2003 in which he said he never knowingly used performance-enhancing drugs.

La Russa wanted Bonds for what he could do on the field.

"One reason I would have loved to have had him as a teammate over the many years is his competitiveness, his talent and his work ethic," La Russa said. "This guy, that's some serious work that he does to get himself ready to compete."

The middle of the lineup is a bit of a question mark after the trades of Rolen and Jim Edmonds. La Russa said in considering Bonds, he was just being thorough.

"You're just trying to include all the possible candidates," La Russa said. "That's what I try to do."

Rays have internal discussion on Bonds

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—The Tampa Bay Rays have had internal discussions about the prospect of pursuing Barry Bonds. Manager Joe Maddon said Monday he knew "little" about what was going on, but acknowledged some thought has been given to the career home-run leader.

"A minor discussion was thrown out there a little bit, and it's really not gone any further than that," Maddon said after Monday's workout at the team's spring training facility. "That's all it is right now."

The St. Petersburg Times reported in Monday's editions that team officials have conferred among themselves about Bonds and other veteran unsigned free agents, such as Kenny Lofton and Mike Piazza. Andrew Friedman, Rays vice president of baseball operations, called the report a "non-story."

Bonds, who broke Henry Aaron's career home run record last summer, has pleaded not guilty to perjury and obstruction of justice charges stemming from testimony to a federal grand jury in 2003 in which he said he never knowingly used performance-enhancing drugs.

Maddon shrugged off a question about how Bonds might fit in with the Rays if the team decided to pursue him and ultimately added him to the roster.

"It's hard to conjecture. ... I don't know this man. I only know what I read, and I'm very much open to meeting people and drawing my own conclusions about people. I don't necessarily believe everything that I read," Maddon said.

"For me to create conjecture of what it's going to be like, I really don't want to go there right now. ... So many things are going good right now. If I have to face those moments, I'll do it at the appropriate time. But for right now, it's really about nothing."

MLB BRIEFS

Report: Clemens letter may go to Justice

WASHINGTON (AP)—A draft letter asking the Justice Department to investigate whether Roger Clemens made false statements to Congress has been written by House staffers, *The New York Times* reported on its Web site Monday. The chief of staff for committee chairman Henry Waxman said no decision has been made on whether to ask for a criminal investigation. The newspaper report cited three unidentified lawyers familiar with the matter. The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform held the Feb. 13 hearing at which personal trainer Brian McNamee repeated his allegations that he injected Clemens with steroids and human growth hormone—and Clemens repeated his denials. Both men spoke under oath during depositions and at the hearing. "I am not going to comment about our internal process except to point out that no decision has been made yet on a referral," Waxman's chief of staff, Phil Schiliro, wrote in an e-mail to The Associated Press. "We are continuing our review and it is possible a decision will be announced this week." Waxman and ranking Republican Tom Davis have been working in concert during the committee's look at steroids in baseball, dating to the 2005 hearing with Mark McGwire. But as of Monday evening, the committee's two sides hadn't been in contact about a letter or a referral. "We've not been told about a draft letter. We haven't been told to expect one. And we haven't been told about a process where anyone was supposed to draft a letter," committee Republican general counsel Keith Ausbrook said. Also Monday, McNamee lawyer Earl Ward said his side will file papers by March 4 asking a federal judge to dismiss the defamation suit Clemens filed against McNamee. Ward said McNamee's legal team will cite "various grounds of jurisdiction as well as the deficiency in the pleading."

Phils' Lidge has successful knee surgery

CLEARWATER, Fla. (AP)—Philadelphia Phillies closer Brad Lidge is expected to miss three to six weeks after having surgery Monday on his right knee. The team said the operation was successful. The 31-year-old right-hander, Philadelphia's biggest offseason acquisition, caught a spike in the mound on his first pitch of batting practice Saturday. Doctors removed torn cartilage from the same knee in October. Phillies assistant general manager Ruben Amaro Jr. said officials will make sure Lidge is healthy before he takes the mound. "I know he'll be chomping at the bit, because he's looking forward to it and he's excited about the season, but ... that's our main goal, that he's healthy when he gets on the mound and pitches for the Phillies," Amaro said. Lidge, who has 123 career saves, finished 2007 with 19 saves in 27 chances and a 3.36 ERA for Houston.

Streaking Fiesta-Grand seeks win No. 8

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Streaking Fiesta-Grand Hotel seeks win No. 8 today when they go up against an unpredictable Saipan World Resort in the opening game of the 2nd Annual HANMI Cup Inter-Hotel Basketball League.

The first game is scheduled at 8pm at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium and will be immediately followed by the Hyatt Regency Saipan-Hafadai Beach Hotel match at 9:30pm.

Fiesta-Grand, which currently leads the standings with a 7-1 record, is on a six-game winning streak and has not lost since suffering an 86-102 thrashing from last year's runner-up Hyatt in Dec. 9. 2007.

In the last six games they played, Fiesta-Grand averaged 100.1 points per night and had an average winning margin of 16.3 points. Fiesta-Grand also defeated World Resort, 87-77, in their first meeting on Jan. 6.

Leading scorers Ryan Sanciangco and Elmer Esdrelon will lead Fiesta-Grand's bid for a seventh straight win against World Resort's two-guard combination of Jerryfel Mangahis and Dennis Vinas.

Sanciangco has been averaging 31 points, 5.6 rebounds, 3.2 assists, and three steals per game, while Esdrelon is turning out averages of 24.6 points, five rebounds, 5.8 assists and 2.4 steals per night.

Esdrelon is also coming off a 47-point explosion in Fiesta-Grand's 120-86 thrashing of Hafadai last Sunday. He also finished with a season-high eight 3-pointers and had 27 points in the first half to lead all scorers.

World Resort is currently in sixth place of the seven-team field with a 2-6 record and nearly pulled off an upset against defending champion Aqua Resort last Saturday.

World Resort held on to several double-digit leads and even enjoyed a 46-30 halftime advantage but collapsed in the second half giving the chance for Aqua to score the come-from-behind win.

Mangahis and Vinas were also instrumental in World Resort's biggest win so far, a 100-88 upset win over Pacific Islands Club on Feb. 10. Mangahis and Vinas combined for 72 points in their team's victory.

In the second game, Hyatt will also go for its fourth straight win when they clash with Hafadai at 9:30pm.

Hafadai will have its hands full against Hyatt's scoring trio of Bernard Aquino, Steven Tenorio, and Edmark Mendoza as they are determined to continue their team's winning run.

The three will have plenty of scoring support from Krisgel Arreza, Mike Umali, Abaya Magno, and Ricardo Basila

Hafadai, meanwhile, will try to bounce back from an 86-120 thrashing they suffered from Fiesta-Grand as Marlon Bamba, Pete Iguel, and Michael Olaitiman resume their hunt for a playoff spot.

RANGAMAR

From Page 28

coaching a team. Sablan, in an earlier interview, said since he could not play he would rather coach.

"We would look into him [John Sablan] coaching but it will depend on the board's decision," said Rangamar.

He said they are not closing the door completely on John Sablan. "BANMI can still reinstate him [Sablan], he can officiate or coach. Hey, everybody makes mistakes and he is still young."

Rangamar cited the case of Fred Pelisamen where the later was suspended in June 2005 but was later reinstated. "Fred redeemed himself by helping in the Rotary league so the BANMI board reconsidered his suspension."

Rangamar suggested that John Sablan and the rest of his teammates could write the BANMI board in order for them to either lessen their penalties or nullify their earlier decision.

BANMI also decided to permanently ban Team Ulloa's with the remaining players, other than those suspended, free to reorganize under a different team name or join other teams.

All four players suspended and the team were given one month to appeal the BANMI ruling.

TES

From Page 28

events in track and field at the Oleai track facility, how baseball and softball are played at the FMP and "Tan Ge" fields before closing out the tour with a volleyball and basketball exhibition inside the Ada gym.

Football is also played at the Oleai pitch, while badminton games are held at the Ada gym, where a weight room is also located.

Sue Babauta said that they made the field trip to introduce their students to different sports played on the island. "We just want to introduce the kids to various sports activities on island. They loved it and had a great time learning about the various facilities."

Babauta said TES, which has the local fish tataga as its official mascot, have a big grassy field that they use when they play sports or any other game. "We hold track and field events, play volleyball, softball, and baseball on the field, and go on the court across the school for volleyball and basketball matches."

She added that they would share the experiences and things they learned to other TES teachers and students.

Rangamar, who is also the president of the Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands, also took the opportunity to donate six youth-size basketballs for the use of the students.

He said this is one of BANMI's plans to donate basketball equipment to various schools and organizations in the CNMI.

SAKOVICH

From Page 28

NMASA Hall of Fame inductee—along with Jean—has extensive experience in the role, as he has served as Tagaman's race director the previous years.

The Sakoviches arrived in the CNMI in 1974 and a year later established the Saipan Swim Club.

The two coached the NMI national swimming team to a total of 22 medals in the South Pacific Games since 1987. Their record in the Micronesian Games is more outstanding, as their swimmers brought home a remarkable 154 medals since 1990.

The two have also been familiar fixtures in organizing on-island sports events, always getting their hands wet in such annual events like the Tagaman Triathlon, Saipan Ocean Swim, and countless other endeavors.

The Sakoviches also helped create NMASA in 1978 and were also instrumental in reviving the Micronesian Games in 1990

The XTERRA Saipan Championship and the 19th Tagaman Triathlon will be held in back-to-back weekends next month.

The 1.5-kilometer swim, 30-km bike, and 12-km run XTERRA Saipan Championship will be held on March 8. It will treat world class triathletes to a swim in the clear warm waters of the Philippine Sea, a bike on coral roads and single-track, and a run through jungle and caves while passing World War II relics. The race starts and ends at Micro Beach.

The 2-km swim, 60-kim bike, and 15-km run Tagaman, meanwhile, begins at Pacific Islands Club and traverses the entire 15-mile length of the island of Saipan. Aside from the XTERRA Saipan Championship and Tagaman Triathlon, the 2008 Saipan Sportfest will also feature the annual Sophia Walk, an XTERRA bike race, and Taga Kids.

The swiss pair of Olivier Marceau and Renata Bucher continued their dominance by winning the 6th XTERRA Saipan Championships last March 17, while Andrew Noble of Australia and Great Britain's Julie Dibens won the 18th Tagaman Triathlon a week later on March 24, 2007. The duo also won the PIC Double for finishing No. 1 in the accumulated times of both Saipan Sportsfest races.

SML

From Page 28

lature to help lower the power rates of the Division of Sports and Recreation.

Faisao also offered the Capital Hill baseball field as a practice venue for all teams participating in the 2008 season.

"As of now, Tuesdays and Thursday are open for the use of the SML. They can play their cancelled games in these days. But anytime an agreement is settled the [Saipan] Little League can start using the field," said Lizama.

Lizama, however, does not know when would the power rate and usage fee issue regarding the Saipan Little League will be be settled. He added that the SML could play every Tuesday and Thursday on an approved basis.

SML coordinator Tony Rogolifoi said he is hopeful that their request to add Thursdays in their weekly schedule would be granted. The SML regularly plays every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

"It would be very convenient for us if Thursday is added to our schedule. We might finish the season earlier, just in time before the rainy season starts," said Rogolifoi.

In other news, the SML will follow the same schedule for the week and would not make any more changes. "It's hard to revise the schedule. As for now we will follow the same schedule and if its possible we will play all canceled or rained out matches on Tuesdays and Thursdays depending on the availability of the field."

A slight drizzle that turned to a heavy downpour Monday night brought the cancellation of the scheduled opening match between the defending champion Tanapag Falcons and the Tigers. They played yesterday but results were not available at press time.

Mel Tenorio's Rock Steady battles the Ford Rangers of Craig Tenorio at 6:30pm today, while manager Park Sang Do's Korean Dreams take on Jay Han's Komoro on Friday.

The last two teams, the D9ers of manager Chel Castro and Dennis Renguul's Kabul, will make their respective debuts on March 3, Monday, when they take the field at 6:30pm.

Badminton Oceania appoint new coaching/development manager

Badminton Oceania is pleased to announce the appointment of their new development manager—Tony Mordaunt.

Mordaunt originally from England now settled in Auckland, New Zealand was the Badminton Coach Force Officer for Badminton North Harbour/ Harbour Sport for two years.

Prior to that he was head coach at the David Lloyd Manchester and Cheadle Club for seven years. He has coached Commonwealth Games gold medallist Colin Haughton, top English players, Chris Hunt, Joanne Wright, Ella Tripp and been apart of the World Class Start Coaching program in England.

Mordaunt has delivered 12 coaching courses in the past year, spent time in Denmark, Korea, Malaysia and was a guest speaker at Badminton England Coaching Seminar in 2004.

Mordaunt comes to the Oceania job with 16 years experience in coaching, coach education and setting up coaching structures. He has a great rapport with players and has excellent communication skills.

Badminton Oceania will be announcing the development program that Mordaunt will be driving shortly. Any members who want visits from Mordaunt are to contact the Oceania office in the first instance. corinne.barnard@badminton.org.au to organize a visit. ***(PR)***

Three days of Non-stop Smokin' races

TAMUNING, Guam—On April 11 through April 13, Shell V-Power and Miller-Lite is proud to once again bring race fans on Guam a motor sports extravaganza that no one will want to miss—the 26th Guam Smokin' Wheels!

It's three days of roaring engines and motor sports competitions that will include off-road buggies, trucks, ATV's, minibikes, and motocross along with 4X4 rock crawling and mudbog, auto-x, drifting, and two nights of drag racing that will certainly bring out the top cars of sport—with non-stop action and racing, there will definitely be something for everyone in the family. ***(PR)***

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	43	12	.782	_
Toronto	31	24	.564	12
New Jersey	25	31	.446	18 1/2
Philadelphia	25	32	.439	19
New York	17	39	.304	26 1/2

Southeast Division

Orlando	36	22	.621	_
Washington	27	29	.482	8
Atlanta	22	32	.407	12
Charlotte	19	37	.339	16
Miami	9	44	.170	24 1/2

Central Division

Detroit	42	15	.737	_
Cleveland	32	24	.571	9 1/2
Chicago	22	34	.393	19 1/2
Indiana	22	35	.386	20
Milwaukee	21	35	.375	20 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	38	17	.691	_
New Orleans	37	18	.673	1
Dallas	38	19	.667	1
Houston	36	20	.643	2 1/2
Memphis	14	42	.250	24 1/2

Northwest Division

Utah	36	20	.643	_
Denver	33	23	.589	3
Portland	29	27	.518	7
Seattle	15	40	.273	20 1/2
Minnesota	11	43	.204	24

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	39	17	.696	_
Phoenix	38	18	.679	1
Golden State	33	22	.600	5 1/2
Sacramento	26	29	.473	12 1/2
L.A. Clippers	19	35	.352	19

Yesterday's Games

Toronto 102, Indiana 98
Washington 95, New Orleans 92
San Antonio 89, Atlanta 74
Dallas 102, Chicago 94
Detroit 98, Denver 93
Boston 104, L.A. Clippers 76

NBA LEADERS

Scoring

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
James, Clev.	49	526	359	1482	30.2
Bryant, LAL	55	517	408	1536	27.9
Iverson, Den.	55	475	456	1462	26.6
Anthony, Den.	50	475	321	1309	26.2
Wade, Mia.	44	381	309	1088	24.7
Stoudemire, Phoe.	52	447	329	1227	23.6
Jefferson, N.J.	56	428	410	1315	23.5
Redd, Mil.	46	353	274	1068	23.2
Nowitzki, Dall.	55	436	350	1264	23.0
Bosh, Tor.	48	369	356	1097	22.9
Yao, Hou.	54	427	343	1197	22.2
Davis, G.S.	55	424	241	1211	22.0
Maggette, LAC	44	294	338	966	22.0
Howard, Orl.	57	421	398	1240	21.8
Boozer, Utah	55	495	195	1185	21.5
Jamison, Wash.	55	435	226	1177	21.4
Jefferson, Minn.	53	469	192	1130	21.3
Carter, N.J.	51	379	240	1058	20.7
Ginobili, S.A.	49	313	271	1016	20.7
Paul, N.O.	52	410	201	1077	20.7

FG Percentage

	FG	FGA	PCT
Biedrins, G.S.	240	386	.622
Chandler, N.O.	243	400	.608
Howard, Orl.	421	697	.604
Childress, Atl.	217	369	.588
Stoudemire, Phoe.	447	765	.584
Lee, N.Y.	218	380	.574
Smith, Minn.	205	368	.557
Curry, N.Y.	264	481	.549
Calderon, Tor.	270	497	.543
Garnett, Bos.	326	601	.542

Rebounds

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Howard, Orl.	57	213	617	830	14.6
Camby, Den.	52	172	565	737	14.2
Kaman, LAC	47	147	480	627	13.3
Chandler, N.O.	51	220	407	627	12.3
Jefferson, Minn.	53	215	420	635	12.0
Duncan, S.A.	50	163	416	579	11.6
Okafor, Char.	56	197	422	619	11.1
Yao, Hou.	54	172	416	588	10.9
Boozer, Utah	55	141	454	595	10.8
Jamison, Wash.	55	161	408	569	10.3

Assists

	G	AST	AVG
Nash, Phoe.	54	623	11.5
Paul, N.O.	52	561	10.8
Kidd, Dall.	53	550	10.4
Williams, Utah	56	542	9.7
Calderon, Tor.	53	471	8.9
Tinsley, Ind.	39	326	8.4
Davis, G.S.	55	439	8.0
James, Clev.	49	366	7.5
Iverson, Den.	55	403	7.3
Billups, Det.	53	376	7.1

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Three days of fun on the sand

The ball slips away from Saki Naivana's block in the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Paul Baxter, right, prepares to block a Phil Dalhausser spike in one of their encounters at the net in their men's bracket match in the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Paul Baxter, left, sets up teammate Randy Steele in the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Paul Baxter does a jump serve in the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Far left, Fiji native Saki Naivana, right, of Guam goes high for a kill in the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Left, Saki Naivana, left, blocks a spike of his opponent in the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Right, Paul Baxter goes down for a return in the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Far right, Phil Dalhausser, left, tries to score against the defense of Paul Baxter at the net in the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Bottom, U.S. pros Paul Baxter, left, and Phil Dalhausser enjoy a light moment after an intense match in the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

PHOTOS AND TEXT By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Players and fans enjoyed three days of intense but fun-filled beach volleyball action at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts over the weekend with U.S. pros sweeping the exhibition match.

U.S. pros Paul Baxter and Phil Dalhausser defeated Japan's Yoshiumi Hasegawa and Shinya Hata, while women's pair Janelle Koester and Jenn Snyder beat Koreans Jeeyeun Han and Ji Youn June.

But serving as the highlight of the 16th edition of the annual Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival was the two-day tournament where several lucky individuals got the chance to team up with the eight professional spikers.

Baxter teamed up with 2004 partner Randy Steele while Baxter was paired with Chris Nelson. Hasegawa partnered with Evan Hunsberger, while Hata had Rod as his partner.

In the women's side, Snyder was paired with Mili Saiki and Koester teamed up with Kelley. Koreans Han and June were partnered with E.J. Lee and Pacific and Mini Games veteran Melissa Halaby, respectively.

After two days of action, the men's pair of Baxter and Steele, and the women's team of Chie Iwana and Yoko Miki emerged as the top winners of the 2008 edition of Micronesia's longest-running beach volleyball event.

Baxter and Steele regained the title they had won in 2004, foiling the back-to-back title bid of last year's winners Shigekazu Fujimatsu and Dasiuke Matsumoto, 21-13.

Iwana and Miki, meanwhile, thwarted the title retention bid of Italy's Federica Tonon, who teamed up with Dawn Penebaker of Hawaii. The Japanese duo defeated Tonon and Penebaker, 15-12, in Game 2.

Iwana and Miki enjoyed a twice-to-beat edge and lost the first game to Tonon and Penebaker, 20-22.

More than 100 players joined both divisions where 30 teams signed up for the men's side, while close to 20 registered for the women's division.

Japan's Yoko Miki and Chie Iwana pose for a photo after winning the women's division in the 16th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts.

Three days of fun on the sand

Players and fans enjoyed three days of intense but fun-filled beach volleyball action at the Pacific Islands Club sand courts over the weekend with U.S. pros sweeping the exhibition match.

27

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Kidd returns to Dallas with a victory

Welcome back Jason Kidd. In his first home game with the Dallas Mavericks in more than 11 years, Kidd had 11 points with nine rebounds and eight assists in a 102-94 victory over the Chicago Bulls on Monday night.

24

Rangamar: Ulloa's given fair chance

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands president Elias Rangamar believes the BANMI board and referees association was fair in its decision involving the D-1 Ulloa's.

BANMI, based on the statements submitted by the referees that officiated the Jan. 21, 2008, Budweiser Cup match between the Ulloa's and the Southern Sonics, has banned the Ulloa's and suspended some of its players in all BANMI-organized or administered leagues and tournaments.

BANMI referees association president Rufino Aguon submitted the written report where a record five technical fouls ware slapped against several players in a tightly fought and highly emotional playoff match.

Rangamar said they are giving Ulloa's a fair chance by letting the team appeal their ruling since BANMI's decision is not final. "They [Ulloa's] can still appeal the decision at a lesser degree or to wave it off."

Rangamar said they would stand by the referees association's report where a player from the Ulloa's elbowed and punched one of the Sonics' members. "If you are mad at the referees don't put your frustrations on the opposing players."

He said the Ulloa's are one of the CNMI's young and talented teams but their talent would be put to waste if they continue to display that kind of behavior. "Remember how they [Ulloa's] played against us [Ol'Aces] in the playoffs? They were really determined to beat us, they were the better team, and they outplayed us the whole game."

BANMI suspended brothers Josh and John Sablan, their cousin Henry Sablan, and teammate and uncle Felix Palacios in all BANMI-organized and administered leagues or tournaments.

John and Henry Sablan were given five-year suspensions, while Josh Sablan was meted out a one-year ban. Palacios was given a lighter sentence and would only sit out for six months.

Rangamar said he has known John Sablan as a fierce competitor inside the court since his younger playing days.

He added that though John Sablan is banned as a player, the BANMI board would look into the issue of him

See RANGAMAR on Page 26

JON PEREZ
Henry Sablan, left, tries to score against an Ol'Aces player in their playoff match in last season's BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium

TES students tour Oleai Sports Complex

Staff from the Division of Sports and Recreation join Tanapag Elementary School teachers and students for a group photo yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. TES students toured the different sports facilities at the Oleai Sports Complex.

JON PEREZ

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Third grade students from Tanapag Elementary School had the chance to tour the Oleai Sports Complex and learn something about the sports played at the facility.

Teachers Astibe Babauta and Sue Babauta accompanied the 34 students and staff from the Division of Sports and Recreation explained to them what sports are being played at the four sports facilities located inside the Susupe Sports Complex.

The students toured the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, Oleai track and field facility, the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field, and the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Softball Field.

DSR staff Elias Rangamar, Joe Mettao, Jovie Omar, Joey Dela Cruz, and Mario Sablan then demonstrated some of the sports that are played at the Oleai Sports Complex.

They showed the kids some of the

See TES on Page 26

SML can use Tuesday and Thursday

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Division of Sports and Recreation director Joe Lizama said the Saipan Major League could still use Tuesdays and Thursdays for their games until a decision over Saipan Little League's previous reservation on those days is settled.

Lizama said Saipan Little League Baseball Association president Juan I. Tenorio has reserved Tuesdays and Thursdays for their games but has yet to finalize their request with the help of acting Department of Community and Cultural Affairs secretary Melvin I. O. Faisao.

Faisao, during the opening ceremony of the 2008 Saipan Little League season last Feb. 8, has pledged DCCA's full support to the SLLBA. He is currently working with the Legis-

See SML on Page 26

JON PEREZ
Masters pitcher Mel Sakisat prepares to throw at the plate in their Budweiser-Saipan Major League finals match against the Tanapag Falcons last year at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

Bill Sakovich expected back Thursday

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Taga Inc. co-founder and former president Wilhem "Bill" Sakovich is expected back on Saipan tomorrow, Feb. 28, to help with the organization of the 2008 Saipan Sportsfest.

Sakovich, who along with wife Jean made Saipan their home for more than 30 years before relocating to Hawaii in May 2004, has been appointed race director of both the 6th XTERRA Saipan Championships and 19th Tagaman Triathlon.

Unlike previous years, both races will be organized locally after the Marianas Visitors Authority decided last year to cut its budget for the XTERRA Saipan Championship from $300,000 to around $100,000, effectively reducing the contract with Team Unlimited from full-fledged organizer to a mere licensing agreement.

This development makes Sakovich's role this year more critical, but the Saipan Swim Club founder and 2004

See SAKOVICH on Page 26